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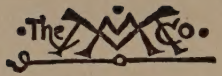

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THE CHRISTIAN CONVICTION

LECTURES ON
THE JOSEPH COOK FOUNDATION
1924-25

By

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Professor of Theology in
McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago

NEW YORK
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FOREWORD

One of the first Western scholars to go around the world presenting the Christian Faith to English-knowing audiences was the late Joseph Cook, widely known through his "Boston Monday Lectures." His initial journey to India, China and Japan in the latter part of the last century not only attracted the attention of many non-Christians to the rational aspects of the Christian religion but also deeply influenced his own thinking. At his death Mr. Cook left his modest estate to establish a Foundation to provide for visits of Western lecturers whose aim would be "the statement and defense of the Christian Faith in the principal cities of India, China and Japan." This Foundation has now become effective and the present volume contains the first lectures provided under its terms. In addition to the countries named, where these lectures were delivered at numerous points, they were delivered in whole or in part in Syria, Egypt, Siam and Korea.

In the preparation of the lectures an earnest effort was made to present the Christian Faith for audiences without a Christian background, as though it were being considered for the first time or as a system still to be discussed. There was gratifying reason to believe that this point of view was acceptable to many who had not given serious consideration to the Christian positions and to many who were uninformed regarding them. In the actual delivery there were many occasions when the audiences were thoroughly trained in the Christian history and philosophy, but the lectures were not altered on that

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account. Groups of missionaries and well trained theological students in all the countries seemed to accept the different point of view with gratitude.

To those who heard the lectures, they will seem expanded at many points. Occasionally this has been done for clarity of exposition, but generally the expansion is part of the original preparation. Naturally, when it was interpreted into other languages each lecture was virtually cut in half. The writer makes grateful mention of more than fifty interpreters, most of whom were citizens of the lands where the lecturing was done. On many occasions it was possible to speak in English with entire freedom, so widely is that language now known among thoughtful members of other races.

The Trustees of the Joseph Cook Foundation are the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., and it is a pleasure to the writer to express his sincere appreciation of his appointment by them to so opportune a ministry.

McCormick Theological Seminary,
Chicago, Illinois,
January, 1926.

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THE CHRISTIAN CONVICTION

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CHAPTER I

THE GROUND OF THE LECTURES

I

It is my purpose in this course of lectures to present anew the essential claims of the Christian Faith and its proposals to the world. Several reasons seem to make it wise to do so at just this time.

1. The disturbed condition of the world to-day justifies thoughtful men in considering any serious proposal for a solution of its problems or a steadying of its spirit. The disturbance affects every department of life—political, economic, social, intellectual, industrial, religious. It affects in varying degrees all levels of society and all national and racial groups. Indeed, so obvious is this unrest and so frequently is it noted that there is grave danger of its passing into a commonplace which will be taken for granted. Earnest men cannot take this attitude toward the prevailing fact of their own day. They may safely be asked to face any serious proposal or program for dealing with it.

Several such proposals are made, but none is more seriously nor more persistently pressed at this time than that of the Christian religion. The Faith is not offered as an institution nor as an organization, but as a spirit of human relationship based on right relation to God. Chris-

tian adherents believe that this religion contains the sufficient hope of the world, and they ask thoughtful men of other beliefs to consider this belief with them. The spirit, which is the essential element in the Christian Faith, has never yet been fully tried because its breadth of application has not been fully appreciated. There has been no adequate attempt to solve the problems of human society by the use of a free religion which binds men together and yet binds each man to God in a sense of personal independence. There is need for such an attempt. Christian thinkers believe there is large promise in it.

The need emerges quite as truly in what is called Christendom as in non-Christian lands. Christ is the severest judge of the nations that bear his name. In one of his own stories he taught that the servant who knows the will of his master and yet fails to do it is beaten with more stripes than the servant who does not know it and fails in it. Adherents of the Christian Faith do not use Christendom as a final and adequate argument for their Faith. They do not minimize the immense achievements of Christianity in Christendom. Instead, most Christian believers would be willing to have the total life of Christendom compared with the total life of non-Christian nations and let the results become part of the argument for Christianity. They believe that the enriched lives of men, women and children, the opportunities for human progress, the concern for great interests, the programs of education, and the usual and evident marks of civilization so common in Christendom, are markedly the product of the Christian religion. The problems of Christendom are not solved, but they are on their way to solution. What Christendom needs is not something other than it now has, but more of what it already has, a fuller and fairer application of the principles and spirit which now are increasingly well known in it. Christendom needs to become Christian as

truly as the rest of the world. It has started towards its goal but that goal is its greatest condemnation, as it is also its greatest hope.

And Christian believers cannot allow that their own problems should be finally solved before offering their solution to other nations. They even deny that this can be done. The world is one, and grave problems of human life can be dealt with successfully only by the whole world. No nation can live to itself alone and no nation can hold its deepest problems as its own peculiar difficulties. At their worst they are mere modifications of the problems of other nations. In a large and vital conference of representatives of many nations recently there was much talk of the peculiar conditions under which these nations were working and of the consequent need for special methods of work, but at the end of the discussion it was evident that the differences were in mere detail, whereas the underlying human needs were the same and the deep principles of conduct did not vary widely anywhere. The solution of the problems of the world must be one since the world is one. There can be no more isolation. There can be heaven nowhere on the earth while there is hell anywhere else on earth.

President Coolidge of the United States has spoken what Christians count a true and vital word: "There is just one way of gaining international peace, and that is through religion." The Christian Faith is offered as a way to world peace.

The ills of the world are the concern of all. Whatever happens anywhere may soon be vital everywhere. None of us has forgotten the plague of influenza which swept over the world a few years ago. It was the same in all nations, bringing death to millions of people and sorrow to many millions more. But it did not start everywhere; it was not born in all lands. One of our great scientific

foundations has traced the plague to its origin in a small and unimportant village in Mesopotamia. One day a man lay sick in that village. Few of the people of the world knew of its existence or cared in the least for its condition; they were going on their own ways as though they had no relation to the rest of the world. Yet the channels of life have now been cut so deep around the world that presently the disease was caught in the flow of its currents, and spread everywhere. We will never again be safe from such possibilities. All proposals of isolation which will protect any land from the rest of the world are chimerical. For weal or for woe we are all in one world, our lives all bound together.

The world is equally intertwined in its intellectual and social interests. The ideas that disturb a nation are often born and nurtured entirely outside of itself. There may be living at this hour in some other land the man or the group of men who will yet rise up to unsettle the most desirable conditions of your own nation. You may in turn be breeding the men who will lead movements of injury in far distant lands. Once men could build protective walls around their countries. That day is past. Even if we should lose all sense of brotherhood and obligation to other men, we would still be challenged in self-defense to recognize our unity as a race, a unity which forces us to share our perils and to solve our problems as a whole and not as isolated units.

Most aggressive movements for the cure of the evils of the world are now being made under Christian auspices, beginning with their own lands. They are not always wise but they are earnest. The recent world cataclysm, in which they were chiefly concerned—a cataclysm not yet ended in some parts of the world—has revealed to them their failure to give their own religion the place it ought to have. They find that cataclysm a standing rebuke,

not of the Christian Faith but of the halting application they have made of its principles and spirit. Christians are to be condemned, and they condemn themselves, because they have not been Christian. It is not strange that they are restating and urging their faith under such conditions.

2. There is a second and deeper reason for renewed consideration of the claims of the Christian Faith at just this time. It lies in the fact that this Faith is offering itself to every man as a final and sufficient religion for his own life. In doing this it is merely proposing to help in supplying the deepest need of humanity. Everywhere, now, there are religions, the earnest and sincere efforts of men to find personal peace and escape from the burdens of sin and ignorance and fear which are common to men, to find the secret of the wide and joyous life which reasonable men feel ought to be lived. A Christian scholar has come to the conclusion that religion is essentially the effort of man to escape a sense of strange perils around him and an even deeper sense of need within him. His inference is that if a man were placed in a world where no such perils existed and where all his needs are supplied, he would have no religion. Other scholars would differ from him, to be sure, but the fact is clear that everywhere men are trying to gain the peace and pardon and power which religion alone has been able to supply to the heart. Indeed, another Christian scholar has collected half a hundred definitions of religion in the effort to express all that it has seemed to different observers. This is no reflection on the validity of religion itself. Religion will always be difficult to define because it is always connected with personal experience. Abstracted from such experience it loses its meaning; it cannot exist apart from a human being who is religious. But it may be possible for a religion to meet the demands of all men, if it deals with the fundamental

needs of humanity. The Christian Faith offers itself as a world religion, offering to fulfill the purposes of all other faiths and to satisfy human needs more fully than they do. I am not just now defending that claim, but merely stating it as a remarkable one. It is, of course, of the very essence of any missionary faith that it shall do this.

Christian believers are convinced that the faith which they profess would enrich all life and bring peace and power to all men. This involves no condemnation nor contempt for any other faith. Many of them are far older in the world than the Christian Faith. They have noble achievements to their credit from whose nobility no informed Christian would detract by any word or argument. Yet it is not on the strength of later appearance that the Christian Faith bases its claim. It is because it meets human needs, inner, deep needs, that its adherents wish it to become universal. One of its thoughtful believers describes it as "highest in its conception of God, a being of holy love, a Father in heaven manifested by Christ; highest in moral standards, the spirit and method of Christ; highest in the goal at which it aims, the kingdom of God on earth, the rule of the spirit that was in Christ in all our human affairs." Another has recently said that "if we hold Christianity as the one true religion it is because in it reason comes to her highest utterance or self-expression."

The underlying reason for this daring claim is that Christian faith is held to be truest to humanity. A Christian writer spoke of the human soul as being "naturally Christian." He meant that the Christian Faith and the human soul are so affiliated that when one comes to the other there is no destruction but only fulfillment. This is the thought of Christian believers. They have no desire to have the peculiarities of any one nation developed for the other nation. It would be a calamity if all races should

become imitators or copies of any Christian nation. Indian Christians are no less Indian for being Christian. It is no part of the program of Christian expansion that Chinese and Japanese shall become Americans or Englishmen. Christian Americans are not less earnestly American. But underneath the difference between Americans, Englishmen, Indians, the Chinese and Japanese, there is a fundamental likeness. They are all human. And it is here that Christianity makes its appeal. It deals with us all as those who have sinned and need pardon, as those who are troubled in spirit and need peace, as those who are weak and need power. Those are not traits of any one race. Is sorrow peculiar to any nation? Is it only one race that mourns? is the human heart with its longings peculiar to any one group? Is sin unknown anywhere? Alas, no. What one man needs all men need, each in his own way, and that will bring peace and pardon and power to one will bring the same gifts to others. Christianity has brought all this to multitudes of adherents and it could not be content without offering all these to others. It is sometimes said that there cannot be one religion for all the race since men are many; the reply is that there can be one religion for all because humanity is one. The Christian Faith is sometimes spoken of as a "Western" religion; its defenders sometimes reply that it is really an "Eastern" religion, by reason of its historical origin. Neither point well taken. Christianity is not a Western religion nor Eastern religion; it is a religion for humanity. Any in it which are peculiarly Western or Eastern are liable from itself and are testimonials to its capacity to serve the needs of men everywhere.

The Christian Faith, therefore, makes two daring claims: one is that it contains within itself the material for the solution of the deepest problems of the world; the other is that it contains the supply for the deepest needs

of all men everywhere. On either account it must naturally be offered to the world as a satisfactory and final faith for the souls of men. Is it not so when a cure is found for any plague of the world? Does it not become at once the right of the whole world to know of it? Yellow fever, cholera, hook worm, tuberculosis, are now the concern of earnest men in every nation. Such men would count it shameful to be silent while the evil still injures their fellows, if they knew the cure. It cannot be otherwise with Christian believers, since the evils with which they are concerned are the deepest in the world and the hope which they have to offer is the richest the world can receive.

3. A third reason for facing anew the claims of the Christian Faith at this time lies in the strong aggressive movement of that Faith in the world to-day. There has been an increasingly rapid spread of the Christian religion everywhere during recent years, specially during the past century and a quarter. It is not a casual or accidental but an organized movement, open, unconcealed, and with declared purpose of continuance. It is probably the most widespread and purposeful movement being consciously advanced in the world to-day. Its results are widespread. From time to time there occurs some obvious and arresting demonstration of those results and of the strength of the movement. Whereupon it appears that three reactions toward it arise: some welcome it, some oppose it, some are indifferent to it. In either case it is clearly wise and proper that the actual meaning of it shall be made plain.

Intelligent advocates of the Christian movement are confident that most of the opposition to it is honest and that indifference to it is wholly natural. But they are equally confident that opposition arises from mistaken ideas of its purpose and meaning, sometimes due to the mistaken methods of presentation of its own advocates, sometimes

due to the lack of attention to it on the part of its opponents. And they are sure that no earnest man would be indifferent to so great a movement of so large a portion of humanity if he realized what it involves of promise for human good. When one opposes a movement in which many of his fellowmen are concerned, it is of first importance that he understand what it is. There are ideas regarding the Christian religion which would make Christians themselves oppose it, if they were correct ideas. As some opponents of the Christian movement describe it, the movement deserves all condemnation. But these descriptions would not be recognized by advocates of that movement. The motives ascribed to its advocates are often such as they themselves would be the first to condemn. The purposes of the movement are often outlined by its enemies in such terms as are wholly incompatible with any intelligent understanding of the religion which is being propagated. It is surely desirable that such a world-wide movement be understood in terms of those who advocate it.

It is equally desirable that those who welcome the Christian expansion renew from time to time their understanding of its fundamental elements. The differences among themselves may often arise from loss of the central and determining heart of the aggression which they are making. Many of the advocates of the movement are from other lands than those in which they are aiding it, and many of those who are of these lands are naturally taking their understanding of the Faith from these earnest leaders. Sometimes it becomes complicated with phases which are only incidental to it, and there is help in going back again to its essential elements. What is it that the Christian Faith proposes to the world in this significant Christian movement? It is reasonable that answer should be made in the various ways which may aid in understand-

ing it. This course of lectures is another attempt to make the answer clear.

II

Certain considerations may be further urged before the main task is attempted.

1. Christianity is not tentatively held by its adherents. They do not hold it as an emotion nor as a blind hope but as a conviction to which they are unavoidably led by their experience and the history which lies behind them. There is a solid body of facts which Christians have faced and which can best be explained by this Faith. Nothing else could furnish the clue to the history of the Christian Faith. It has had unworthy chapters, of which no others are more severe critics than Christians themselves. There have been times when the genius of Christianity has been forgotten or contradicted and some adherents have sought to force others into their conviction. It is to be noted that the escape from these bad times has always been by way of a renewed and assertive conviction on the part of loyal adherents of the Faith. In any true faith there is provision for differences, and if that provision is either abused or denied the escape is simply by return to it and the assertion of conviction again. This has happened many times in Christian history. The Christian conviction is not a bondage but a wide liberty. It is not a clamp which a few set on the minds of others, but a fellowship in which all may share.

2. The result is that there is not and cannot be a complete and final statement of what Christianity is. If it were an institution or an organization or a system of any kind, it could be worded with finality. But, while it has and uses all those things in various forms, it is none of them. It is a spirit of life, a body of living truth. Any vital faith is more easily described than defined, just as any marked personality is more readily described than

defined. This is especially true of the Christian Faith since it is essentially the religion of a Person, Jesus Christ. He becomes the test of all differences. In the quaint phrase of John Wiclif (who himself suffered at the hands of some who made no allowance for differences), whatever is done or said, no man must hold any faith as Christian which makes Jesus himself a heretic. To a Christian, Jesus is right, whoever else is wrong. The constant test of any teaching is its agreement with the teaching of Christ. The constant measure of any spirit is its agreement with his spirit. But if the Christian Faith is right about who Christ is, then no single human system of thought could cover all of his truth. There may even be room in statements of Christianity for what look to be contradictions, though they will be only apparent and their reconciliation will be wrought out in some higher and wider concert. This has happened more than once.

3. A further result is that Christian believers seek to lay no restriction on the thought life of those who may accept the Christian Faith. At an interesting crisis in Christian and political history, a leader once said that God had more light yet to break forth from his word. It has proved true. Christians do not come to other lands with a finished and closed faith. Its substance is fixed and assured, but the interpretations that may be put upon it are many. New applications are always possible for the new day and the new conditions under which other nations live. From its beginning the Christian Faith has been the same and yet never the same. Its central Figure, its gift of pardon, peace and power, its sacred book, its message of a spirit of life—these have not changed. Succeeding generations have felt the same power and have rejoiced in the same assurances about God and their fellows. And yet each new generation, as each new race, has discovered new meanings and new values in the old

truth. Christianity is a vital, not a merely static fact. It has its fixed points around which the whirl of life runs, but they are vital points which set the mind free.

4. In the third lecture attention will be called to the personal phases of Christianity, phases which make it impossible to judge it by all those who live in Christendom. A man is not made a Christian by the fact that he finds his home in a particular land. Indeed, so personal is the Faith that some of its adherents object to the very term, "Christian land." They fear that it implies that Christianity could justify conditions in the lands so named, conditions which are utterly repulsive to it. They fear also that all those who make up the population of a Christian land might be supposed to be adherents of the Christian Faith. A man becomes a Christian by his own choice, not by his nationality. Some of the bad chapters of Christian history have been those in which men were supposed to be changed from some other faith in a wholesale way. Nothing could be more utterly foreign to the Christian system. It is true that every man who lives in a Christian land partakes of rich benefits from that Faith, but he may be one of its bitterest opponents, because it has to be personally apprehended and accepted and a man may refuse that acceptance. Some less thoughtful men may accept the Faith as a matter of course, but somewhere in the history of any really thoughtful man there comes a time when he must face its acceptance for himself. At such times three things may happen to turn him from the Faith; he may fail to give its arguments their weight, he may misunderstand its central claims, or he may be concerned for some phases of life which do not seem to him to involve the Faith.

Instances are readily available for all these causes of rejection of the Christian Faith in Christian lands. In Italy a celebrated poet had ridiculed Christianity, refusing

all connection with it, but when, in a desire to be fair to it, he did turn to the sacred book he was captured by it, and committed himself publicly to the Faith. A celebrated British scholar renounced his adherence to the Faith, going so far as to write against it, but when he cast about among his scholarly acquaintances he found so many of them humbly loyal to it that he was led to study it afresh, and again committed himself unreservedly to it as the faith of his life. In a test of scientific men in America a few years ago, it was found that a considerable number of them did not hold the Christian Faith nor any other religion, but their replies indicated also that they had become absorbed in their distinctive departments of study and were no longer surveying the field of spiritual interest which is the special domain of religion. In Christian lands it is preoccupation that explains indifference to the Christian Faith on the part of some scholars. Once in a while, often enough to be noted, this preoccupation may be moral. There are men whose personal lives would not endure the test of Christian ethics. They do not want Christianity to be true nor vital, for, if it were, then their own lives would need radical alteration. The Christian Faith lives awkwardly with selfishness and meanness and impurity, and if a man is committed to any of these, he must abandon the Christian Faith or his own practices. This is not the prevailing fact, but sometimes it proves true. Generally the preoccupation which prevents Christian Faith is intellectual or economic. Other interests have absorbed attention to such an extent that the interests of religion are crowded out.

This is the easier where, as in America, there are no public requirements that demand religious participation. There are no religious requirements for public life in America, none for social standing, none for commercial success. Religion is personal, even with all its many social

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influences. Nothing forces it on men in a truly Christian atmosphere. It need not cause wonder, therefore, if there are non-Christian people in Christian lands. Those who are Christians are so from conviction, the same conviction that is behind the entire effort to make Christianity a world force both for the supply of individual needs and for the correction of world evils.

The three especial reasons noted warrant the discussion anew of the essential elements in the Christian Faith and its proposal to the world. Its main offer to human life is of three great gifts: a Unique Person—Jesus Christ, the Founder of the Faith; a Unique Book—the sacred book of the Faith; and a Unique Experience—the religious experience of the Christian believer. These three gifts suggest also the twofold origin of the Faith—in history and in experience. The discussion must now turn toward these elements of the Christian proposal.

Chapter II

THE CHRISTIAN CONVICTION IN ITS HISTORICAL ORIGIN

I

The Christian conviction has two main sources. In its most vital form it issues from personal experience, which will be discussed in the next lecture. In its most continuous form it issues from history. Of course history and personal experience are closely related. All history is first some one's experience, and in turn personal experience soon becomes part of history. But each person has available for his own thinking the experience of earlier generations and it is often easier to estimate forces in the long range than in one's own day.

Christianity has a great advantage in being a *founded* religion, with an historical origin and a history. As a faith it is so vital that its adherents may go astray, but there is always something to which they can return, something by which they may gauge their own progress. The Founder of the Christian Faith was not a reformer, in our modern meaning of the word, though he did call men back to certain neglected truths. He was, essentially, an originator, starting in the world of thought and life new currents which had not been running there before. For this reason he has always been the norm for Christian ethic and religion. The truths he taught were not static but vital and hence they were capable of great development, but they may always be held true to their origin and it is

always possible to carry them in their current form back to their first form, in order to determine their accuracy. This does not preclude their growth, but it safeguards against the introduction of foreign and conflicting matter into their normal development. It is as though a gardener found his plants endangered by the pollen of strange growths but could always bring them back to their purposed growth by renewing their fundamental nature. The vital plant which we call Christianity may gather to itself extraneous and hurtful material, but it can always be renewed in its early substance by return to its historical origin.

The value of this historical origin was proved early in the history of the Christian Faith, when there appeared a system of religion which bore a striking resemblance to it at many points, the faith called Mithraism. It had ceremonials much like those of Christianity, its traditional and mythical founder had many experiences like those of Christ, its methods were closely similar. For a time it flourished widely and its success seemed to support the views of those who discount the value of historical foundations for religion. But it faded away precisely because it lacked those foundations. No religion is kept vital by its exalted conceptions and lofty practices. If it is not rooted in history, if its ideals have never been part of human history, if its theories of life are only theories, then it will lack power to grip men whose lives are very real and who need help in the pressing realities of the world. Christianity lived while Mithraism died because it could always refresh itself at its original and historical fountain, while Mithraism had no such sources.

II

The vital fact in this historical origin of the Christian Faith is the unique Figure of Jesus Christ Himself. The

main facts of his life are now fairly well known among thoughtful men of all nations. The events occurred about nineteen hundred years ago. He was uniquely born and lived his entire earthly life of about thirty-three years in Palestine, a province of the Roman Empire, where he taught and worked marvels of healing and did good in many ways. He incurred the enmity of some of the leaders of the Jewish race into which he had come, and they in turn brought him into disfavor with the Roman authorities, so that he was put to death by crucifixion. He revealed his uniqueness throughout his entire life, but notably in the fact of his acceptance of death for the fulfillment of the purpose of his life and in his reappearing after his death by resurrection from the dead. Without these last facts there is no adequate explanation of the history of the Christian Faith. Neither the death nor the resurrection of Christ was anticipated by his followers; the former was baffling to all their hopes, the latter was incredible to them until they were borne down by indubitable experiences. They had expected a totally different outcome for his life, and it was only after the events that they came to see large meaning in his death and to accept his resurrection. But from that time the Founder of the Christian Faith has been thought of, not as a merely historical Figure, but as a living reality in the world.

It was inevitable that such a figure as he is claimed to be should be the subject of endless discussion. Scholarly opinion does not seriously discuss the reality of his earthly life. Sir James Frazer, a scholar in the field of anthropology whose opinions have great weight, expresses the matter in this way:

> The doubts which have been cast on the historical reality of Jesus are in my judgment unworthy of serious attention. Quite apart from the positive evidence of history and tradition, the origin of a great

religious and moral reform is inexplicable without the existence of a great reformer. To dissolve the Founder of Christianity into a myth, as some would do, is hardly less absurd than to do the same for Mohammed, Luther and Calvin. Such dissolving views are for the most part the dreams of students who know the great world chiefly through its pale reflection in books.

It should be remembered that there is no element in the life or work of Christ which has not been the subject of constant and sharp criticism and investigation. He has not been blindly accepted nor loosely held, and Christians are not fearful of the continuance of the criticism nor do they count it either irreverent or impious, for the appeal of religious faith must always be to man at his intellectual best.

Christian believers have found their Master unique at many points, chiefly in these three: in his person, in his teaching, and in his work. The third must be the subject of later lectures, for it is especially in his work as Savior and as builder of a Kingdom of God in the earth that he has mastered the hearts of his followers. It is in this work that he has shown himself able to lift the burden of sin from the heart and set the will free to a new life. More Christians would choose the word Savior for their Master than any other one word. And it is common testimony from lands where he is newly known that it is this saving work of Christ that first captures the thoughts of new believers. To be set free from the shadows of fear, from the sense of sin, from the dread of the future, to be given what one of the Christian writers calls the glorious liberty of the sons of God—that is the outcome of the unique work of Christ.

1. There has been no wide difference regarding the

teachings of Christ. Their moral and spiritual excellence has been quite universally recognized. We spoke a moment ago of a certain scholar as having found himself captured by Christ when once he gave himself to thoughtful study of him. This same scholar phrased it in this way:

> One of the strongest pieces of objective evidence in favor of Christianity is the absence from the biographies of Christ of any doctrines which the subsequent growth of human knowledge, whether in natural science, ethics, political economy, or elsewhere, has had to discount. . . Even Plato's Dialogues have absurdities in reason and shock the moral sense, yet it is confessedly the highest level of human reason in the line of spirituality when unaided by alleged revelation.

Another scholar, whose work is specially in this field, enlarges on the statement by adding that "when we consider what a large number of sayings are recorded of, or at least attributed to Christ, it becomes most remarkable that in literal truth there is no reason why any of his words should pass away in the sense of becoming obsolete."

We are to consider some of these teachings in later lectures, especially the teachings regarding God and man and the future. Just now it will be enough to point out a few characteristics of the teachings of Christ as a whole.

(a) For one thing they move in the field of daily life and not in the field of mere speculation. This is not to despise speculative inquiry, for Christians have been almost as noted as others for their speculative systems. It merely recognizes that speculation and practical life may be far removed from each other. And Jesus spoke in terms of daily life. He did not deal with its lesser details alone,

since these differ for different men and lands, but he laid down the principles on which life is to be lived everywhere, yet drawing these principles out of actual experiences through which men were passing. One striking incident of this kind may illustrate the whole. A man came to Jesus one day, asking him to force his brother to divide up their inheritance more equitably. Jesus declined to interfere since there were regularly constituted processes for accomplishing this, but immediately he laid down the principle which must govern in all such cases. He said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness." Clearly this was the root of the difficulty. When he was asked to name the most vital laws for life, he named two, those which call for the spirit of love both for God and for man. This does not tell what to do under special conditions—that may need to be settled according to one's best judgment—but it does tell exactly what principle of life one shall apply. The accent of Christ's teaching is not on principles of thought but on moving principles of life. He is not dealing with scruples of conscience but with the demands of a daily life that must be lived by men on the street, in the home, at business and elsewhere. He was himself a peripatetic teacher, walking around where men were, seldom calling them away from their ordinary homes to hear him talk, but going here and there with utmost freedom, meeting their daily problems and showing them how they were to be solved. Only a very small group were asked to leave their daily occupations to become constant listeners to his teaching, and these were commissioned to tell the same truths to others, most of whom in turn would remain in their familiar walks of life.

(b) But though the teaching is exceedingly practical, it deals with the deepest truths that man can consider. An American statesman once said that the greatest thought that had ever engaged his mind was that of his personal

accountability to God. Most men would place the thought of God himself at the forefront of their intellectual concern. It was central in the teaching of Jesus. He talked much about God, never in high and stilted terms, yet never irreverently and cheaply. Plainly he thought of God as his loving Father whose message he was bearing to his fellows, and whose work he was to do in the world. A later chapter will develop more fully the Christian conception of God. We notice here merely the fact that it is central in the teaching of Christ.

(c) But beside the practical and profound elements in the teaching, there is a marked characteristic of expansion. It is germinal and not merely complete. It looks backward to a long series of human experiences with God and the truths that were thus revealed, and it prepared the way for a rich development which is found in early and later Christian writers. As we shall see when we discuss the sacred book of the Faith, the teaching of Jesus constitutes only a small section of its entire content, yet his seal is on the book by his endorsement of the early writings which preceded himself and by his inspiration of the later writings which followed him. While Jesus was essentially an originator, yet he did not fail to recognize the teachings which had preceded him and which indicated the loving care of the heavenly Father for the world.

2. The uniqueness of Christ appears especially in his person. It was inevitable here also that there should be much discussion. The men among whom he first lived were Jews and were strongly convinced of the unity of God and of his remoteness from mere humanity. Yet they came to see in Jesus Christ not merely a perfect man but also a manifestation or incarnation of God. The steps whereby they reached this conclusion seem to have been three. First, they observed that he was teaching them something about God which no one else had taught.

Next, they observed that he was himself very like the God of whom he taught. Sages in all lands have urged that one's life and one's teachings should correspond; the followers of Christ found that there was an intimate agreement between his teaching about God and the character and spirit which he himself showed. Then they took the amazing third step, to which they were urged by the experiences they had with him, and came to believe him to be the actual presence and reality of the God of whom he had taught them. They did not begin their following of him with any smallest idea that this might be true about him, nor was it a conclusion reached after centuries of myth-making had passed. They declared their conviction in the prime of their own days, when memories of him were vivid and multitudes of men before whom he had walked and talked were still living. Before their experience of him they would have counted any such idea blasphemous and impossible. It was in their experience of him that they were brought to their conclusion, a conclusion which is now the conviction of the great body of Christian believers.

The best single phrase covering the subject is a very familiar one. The Christian conviction is that *Christ is God and man united in one Personality.* (*a*) The idea of a god taking human form is not uncommon in other faiths, but that is not the Christian conception. In the mythological faiths of earlier days it was sometimes taught that a god, one among many, had assumed human form or appearance for the gaining of certain ends. In the Christian Faith the incarnation means that God himself has come into real humanity, to make himself known, to bring to men that pardon which their sense of sin demands and to set before them a perfect example of human living. In some other faiths it has been taught that a man, by the nobility and sacrifice of his life, has attained to deity. The

Christian Faith knows no such teaching. For that Faith it is never man who becomes God, but in Jesus Christ God has become man. This is not the difficult idea for the Christian Faith that it would be for some religions. On the one side is the fact that man is made in the image of God and that in assuming human nature God is not violating his own nature, and on the other side is the fact that God is omnipotent in his love and can do whatever his love demands for those whom he loves. Between man and God there is no such gulf fixed as in some faiths, though there is no suggestion in the Christian faith of ultimate human attainment to divinity. The infinite may assume finite reality, though there is no possibility of the finite assuming infinity. And if it is urged that incarnation is not possible to the infinite God, then it must be noted that in that case the infinity of God becomes a limitation upon him. If he is not great enough to enter into human life, then it is possible to conceive of a God greater than the infinite, one who can be so fully lord of his own life that he can become incarnate and yet remain in possession of his infinite reality. The conception of infinity and that of incarnation are not contradictory; the possibility of the latter is included in the former. God may become man, though man may not become God.

So strong was this early impression of the deity of Christ that the first difference with which Christian believers had to contend was not the denial of his deity but of his humanity instead. Some early students asserted that Christ had merely seemed to be human and had been really nought but God. Of course there came later much discussion regarding his true deity. But the main current of Christian thinking has asserted the formula just used, declaring him both God and man in one personality. The evidence for so amazing a position is partly historical, partly the outcome of experience, partly the effect of the

work he has done. There are some things which only God could do and these things the Christian finds that Christ does. It was a complaint of the early observers of Jesus that he forgave sins, which is a prerogative of God. Another complaint was that he assumed the titles and authority of God. Both these complaints are accepted by the Christian believers as among the true rights and honors of Christ. He satisfies their need for God. They find God in him.

There is a common principle of thought which may be invoked here: cause must be adequate for effect. Christ must have been whatever he needed to be in order to do what he did. To count him an ordinary person while he accomplishes such extraordinary results seems neither logical nor consistent. One of the Christian philosophers began his study with an analysis of the facts of the redeemed soul and argued that the Redeemer must be counted adequate to produce that result. He found that no one short of God could have accomplished the work which Christ did and does accomplish.

(*b*) At the same time, the conviction of the true and full humanity of Christ is very dear to Christian believers. His life on the earth was undoubtedly that of a human being. He was not a seeming man but a very real one, with human body and growing mind, and therefore he understands ordinary human needs and desires. He brings a great hope and assurance to men of our own sort in his showing that sin and wrong and selfishness are no necessary part of human life. He lived his own rich full life without stain of any sort, yet he mingled freely with the world and took his part in human activities. Until his public life demanded all his time, he did the work of a carpenter, and in all his teaching he shows himself close in spirit with the working world, though his concern is not for men as workers or as rulers or as masters and servants,

but for men as men. He was great enough to understand all the great, and humble enough to be a brother to the lowly. We know from him that sin is no part of true human nature and that it may be wholly eradicated from us without destroying or maiming our human personality. Indeed, the great argument for Jesus which satisfies many hearts is the fact that he did not merely tell men how to live their lives but lived the right life before them. The Christian scheme of life is not a mere theory. It has been lived. It might be a new thing for a man to-day to live that life, but it would not be new in the world, for Christ lived it. And in that fact any man can find inspiration and live it himself.

(c) For it is a vital part of the Christian conviction about Christ that his life has not ceased from the earth. At the end of his incarnate life he was cruelly put to death, yet it was a self-surrender as truly as an unjust execution, and after it was over he resumed his life and has never surrendered it again. To the Christian, Christ is a living fact. He *did* live, but he *does* live. There is a familiar story of a great Christian preacher in England that one day he was writing his sermon for the celebration of the resurrection of Christ and came naturally to the words, "Christ is living," when suddenly they seemed to leap from the page into his very heart. He rose from his desk and walked back and forth in his study saying aloud and joyously, "Christ is living! Christ is living!" It had long been his faith, but that day it became a great and inspiring reality to him. In some Christian churches, on every Sabbath day a hymn is sung which celebrates the resurrection of Christ. Indeed, the very Sabbath itself is to the Christian a reminder of that great fact. In the faith from which Christianity makes its historical descent, the day of rest is conceived as closing the week, as God closed his activity in the creation of the world; but in the

Christian Faith the day was early conceived as opening the week, as Christ began a new course of life for all believers by his resurrection from the dead on that day.

In a later lecture we shall observe one effect of this assurance about Christ upon the Christian conception of God, giving to it one of its very richest aspects in what is known as the doctrine of the Trinity. This is not a mere metaphysical conception. Instead, it is a purely practical way of dealing with certain great and undeniable experiences and facts with which the Christian is faced as soon as he really reaches his conviction about Christ. The doctrine originated in the constraint on thoughtful men for the rationalizing of their total experience, and something like it continues to be a necessity for such men. To the adherents of some other faiths the idea of the Trinity is objectionable, because they come upon it purely intellectually (and there of course it must ultimately justify itself), but if it is approached as the early Christian believers approached it, from the side of experience, and is used as a clue to the labyrinth of experience with God, it is not so difficult. Moslem believers in late years testify that they have found peace in the fact of the Trinity exactly as the early Christians did, by finding Christ real to themselves and so being led to the idea of such a rich divine personality as the doctrine suggests. They had supposed it was equivalent to the idea of three gods, an impossible conception, or they had seen in it the impossible equation that three and one are equal. Their experience with Christ has made the fact of the Trinity helpful to them, as it has been to multitudes of believers since it came into the knowledge of men.

The Christian Faith offers this unique Person to a world whose largest single evil is its low estimate of personality. Everywhere individual men, groups, races, are looked down upon by other individuals, races and groups. Men are

rated lower than animals or things at many points of the world. It is the evil of the present industrial system that machines become masters of men and the human factor is discounted. It is the evil of much of the social organization of the world that men are made to do the work of animals in order to gain a daily livelihood. They are measured by their muscles and not by their manhood. The sharpest complaint that can be made of international relations is that so many programs proceed upon assumption of the inferiority of some nations and lead to a disregard of sheer human rights. And within nations, certain groups are rated too low in the scale to receive the equal treatment that manhood inherently deserves. The world's standard of manhood is low and there is needed a new estimate of human worth. The Christian religion centers on a Person who constitutes in turn a norm of personality. It sets this Person over against all institutions and organizations and programs and proposes to the world that personality be given the supreme place in all thinking. That Christendom has failed here is better known among Christians than by any other men, but what Christendom needs is what the whole world needs, and the level of human value must be lifted everywhere if it is to be lifted anywhere.

The Christian Faith bears testimony that the chief reality in the world-order is personality. If men hold each other in contempt, at least Almighty God does not hold them so, for he counted it suitable to his own greatness to enter into human life and to establish for men a norm for manhood. When there grows into common human thinking this estimate of human worth, there will be changes of unmeasured value to the world.

Christian believers do not ask other men to begin in their thought of this unique Person where they themselves stand, but to begin where men began with him at the first, to accept him for what he seems to be at any point,

to follow faithfully his program of life and to give his teaching and personal influence the weight they deserved. They are then assured that he will prove himself to others, as he has already proved himself to his followers, as more than man and yet fully and truly human.

III

The second gift which the Christian Faith offers to the world is a Unique Book—the sacred book of the religion. It is closely connected with the Unique Person because Christ is central and normative in it. This book, called in Christian language simply "*The* Book," though it consists of several parts and three score booklets, has had an interesting history. It is not the work of any one writer; indeed, some of the writers are not known, and the fact does not trouble Christian believers in the least, for they do not gain their assurance of its value from any opinion of its origin, but from their experience of its vitality, an experience which is constantly renewed with each new generation of men to whom it comes. The writing of this book covered between twelve and fifteen hundred years, though its story begins with the creation of the world and ends with the close of the first generation of the Christian Faith. It is naturally devoted chiefly to an account of religious development before and after Christ. There are three distinct sections: one tells briefly the movements of preparation for the coming of Christ, especially as that preparation lay in the history of the Jewish people; the second tells the brief story of the life of Christ on the earth, four short accounts being given of it; the third contains a brief account of the beginning of the Christian enterprise after the resurrection of Jesus, partly in the form of a record of one of the principal leaders of the early Christian movement, and partly in the form of letters written by different writers to new converts, explaining

more fully the meaning of the Christian message and the method of the Christian life. The books which make up the Book are all small and the complete volume is quickly read. There is a singular unity running through the long story but there are also marks of progress and of differences, such as might be expected in a growing religious experience. To Christian believers this progress seems to be not from error to truth so much as from partial light to fuller. Throughout their acceptance of the Book, Christians make Christ their norm, as in all other matters.

For most Christians two words express their thought of their sacred Book. They speak of its revelation and of its inspiration. The words mean two quite different things. (a) In certain senses it is all a revelation because it makes God and man, duty and the future, known, as they were not known before nor are known elsewhere. Yet some parts of the book contain truths about God and man and the future which are not learned elsewhere, and in this fuller sense it is called a revelation. It has come in various ways, some of them most natural, as when one writer set himself to learn the accurate facts about the life of Christ and recorded them without comment. Some ways of revelation have been much more unusual, as when men had visions and announced their results as the voice of God. This is what might have been expected, for God makes himself known in the common things of life as well as in its unusual experiences. In making God seem real Jesus made more use of common facts, such as flowers and birds and household practices, than of exceptional things. Yet he did not hesitate to find the hand of God in calamities nor to seek his presence in remote and unusual places. The Book could hardly be true to Christian ideas if it did not find space for both ordinary and extraordinary events and experiences. In both the ordinary and the extraordinary the revelation of God will be found.

(b) When Christian believers speak of their sacred book as inspired they are not expressing merely a theory but are trying to describe a fact. The Bible has an influence and makes an impression which is not apparent in other books. Something gives it that unusual power, a power which results in an impulse to become like the God whom the Book reveals. It is a Book which good men use to make bad men good, in which troubled people find the comfort they need; a Book which has the ability to make men accept all manner of strain for the sake of the good of others. Such a book cannot be fairly considered commonplace. It is the part of reason to seek the grounds of this difference from books which have not such power. The reason the Christian believer finds is that God has spoken in and through the sacred Book in a peculiar and definite sense. All believers have not agreed on the way whereby this power has been granted to it. Some have found the explanation in its words, some in its ideas, some in its spirit. But all Christians agree that the Book itself has a power which sets it on a summit in relation to other books.

The attitude of the Christian Faith toward its sacred book is different at several points from the attitude assumed by other faiths toward their own sacred literature. This literature is much smaller in Christianity than in other faiths. Moreover, it is held to have power and spirituality in any language quite as truly and fully as in its original tongues. Indeed, it has had far wider sweep and much greater influence in languages that did not exist when it was written than it ever had in the original tongues. Nothing like it has ever been known in the field of literature. The Bible has existed, in whole or in part, in something more than seven hundred different languages and dialects, and it is now in active use in more than six hundred such tongues, the others having become obsolete. It

has not been put into these tongues by their own users as a gift to literature, but by its own adherents for the sake of its religious value. It has been Christians who have been back of all movements to make the Bible known, and their purpose has been the religious good of those to whom they gave it. In many instances the believers have learned languages for the sake of putting their sacred book into them. Sometimes they have even reduced languages to writing, and taught an entire tribal group to read, in order that they might read this book. They have not done this narrowly. No serious effort has been made to propagate any considerable body of religious literature among the people of Christendom by adherents of other faiths, but there is much of that literature which is available in the tongues of Christendom through the efforts of adherents of the Christian Faith and believers in the sacred Book of that Faith.

It is quite impossible to suppose that such a book has no special character. An eminent Christian scholar who became one of the highest authorities on the original texts of the Christian Bible, handling it by purely literary and historical methods, bore this testimony: "I have studied the Bible for years like other books and so I have found it is not like other books." The Christian attitude toward it has ranged all the way from a kind of superstition to a merely high estimate of its value, but nowhere is it discounted among believers. It is too matter-of-fact in itself to permit the superstitious attitude to be long maintained, and it is too forceful in the lives of men to permit the merely high estimate to be consistently maintained. The middle ground is the generally accepted one among Christian believers. This finds the Bible a record of the way in which men have searched for God but more largely still a book in which is recorded the revelation of himself

by God to men, a book which can best be described as an inspired revelation.

The greatest achievements of this Book do not lie in the far past. They are of this day as well, and the Book has never had so wide a circulation nor such wide usage as to-day. It still surprises those who come upon it for the first time. The German poet, Heinrich Heine, was changed in his last days from being an opponent of the Christian Faith to a warm adherent of it. He has told the story of his change.

> Neither vision nor ecstasy, neither voice from heaven nor bodeful dream, has pointed the way of salvation to me. I owe my enlightenment quite simply to the reading of a book. Of a book, you say? Yes, and it is an old and homely book, plain as nature herself, a work-a-day, unpretentious looking book—and the book is sometimes called quite simply The Book, The Bible. Rightly it is also called Holy Writ. He who has lost his God may find Him again in this Volume and he who has never known Him will there be met by the breath of the divine Word.

When Christian believers are asked for books on the inspiration of their Bible, they often reply that the Bible itself is the only satisfactory book on the subject. The argument for its inspiration has at the last to be gathered from itself. Inspiration is a quality which must be displayed before it can be admitted. If the Bible did not reveal in itself traits which set it apart from other books, if men who give it an opportunity to influence them did did not find it making God more real, if it did not win its way purely by moral force—then no outside argument could convince an inquirer. The largest single agency for the publishing of the Bible has in its charter the provision that it must publish the Book without note or comment,

but must leave it to explain and approve itself. Yet it bears much study and interpretation. It has been remarked that the power of the Bible to survive its commentators is an additional proof of its divine origin! Still, it is suggestive that it is the theme of some hundreds of thousands of sermons and class groups each week, yielding every year some new material for thoughtful minds. It is the constant storm center of discussion and criticism. Some ideas about it have been changed by recent study. Some of these new ideas may need to be changed in turn. But the main fact abides, that the sacred Book of the Christian Faith brings to men an idea of God and humanity, of present duty and future hopes, of earthly life and life beyond the earth, which satisfies their hearts. All that Christians ask for it is that it be given an opportunity to approve itself as the word of God to the heart of man. The Book is available for the observation and analysis of any reader. It asks only that fairness which is the right of any serious book. Nothing is asked of any reader but that he shall take the Book as it offers itself, as an honest book of religion. No vote of church or council has given it its high place among Christian believers. Long and continuous experience with it has convinced its adherents of its value. They believe such experience would convince others.

This sacred Book of the Christian Faith is offered to a world of divided mind as a unifying center of thought. There is no suggestion of uniformity of thought. No clamp is to be put on the minds of its readers. Sometimes adverse attention is called to the wide differences of opinion regarding the Bible which exist among Christian believers. Such differences are part of the freedom which the Book itself gives to its adherents. It would be deadly if any book offered itself in religion as a limitation on the freedom of the mind. Instead, the Bible offers itself

as an inspiration to the freest thinking. But in the midst of that freedom there is an underlying unity, a unifying center of thought. Already it is true that on the special day of Christian worship in nearly all the lands of the earth, more people gather around this one Book, to read it and to hear its ideas expounded, than gather around any other common center. Their thoughts are their own but they lie within a broad circle of agreements. Such a unifying center is needed in the divided mind of the world to-day, bringing men to thoughts which they share with their fellows of other lands and races, guiding them to an agreement which shall be free but real. This agreement is to be found in the wide field of religion where men think of God and their relation to him and to each other. It admits no bondage of mind, no uniformity of thought or expression, but it needs somewhere a center, a common source of inspiration. Christian believers find such a common center in the sacred Book of their Faith, and they offer it to the world as that unifying center of thought.

CHAPTER III

The Christian Conviction in Its Personal Origin

It is a familiar fact in nature that some plants have a double tap-root, drawing their strength through both its branches. The Christian Faith is such a plant. It draws its strength from history and from a constantly renewed experience. In the preceding lecture attention was called to the historical origin of the Faith, particularly its historical Figure, Jesus Christ, and its historical book, the Bible. In a later lecture there will be discussion of the institution in which the Faith expresses itself in history, the Christian Church. Some Christian adherents find in the Church a further historical source of the Faith, while most adherents see in it no originating source but solely an expression and embodiment of Christianity. All agree that the Faith runs back for its historical origin to the two factors already discussed.

I

In this lecture we are to discuss the second main source of the Christian conviction—its perennial origin in personal experience and in a corporate experience built up through centuries of history. We have already noted that these two lines of origin are not disconnected. What we call history is the record of what men have experienced in the past, and present experience will soon pass into history for the guidance of later men. Yet other elements than religious experience enter into history, and much

that men of one age experience must be reconsidered by later ages. The abiding inheritance of experience is that body of material which has proved valid for successive generations and through differing conditions. But nothing can ever seem vital to any generation which cannot be reproduced in its own life in all its essential elements. When a religion becomes entirely historical and does not make itself real in living men, it has already died out of human life.

There can be no explanation of the vigorous Christian movement of the present day apart from this habit of the Faith of reproducing itself in living men. If there were not some millions of men around the world who are finding in the Christian religion the supply of their deepest needs, men to whom the Christian Faith is a present, living reality which they wish to share with others, there could be no sustaining force for such a movement of expansion as exists to-day. Such an expansion would be doubly difficult without an historical background, to be sure, but it would be wholly impossible if there were nothing but that background and if there were not a vital experience of religion in the hearts of present believers. The problem for observers of the Christian Faith is not to explain its historical origin but to explain its renewed origin in each generation. Sometimes it is said in non-Christian lands that Christianity has lost its vitality in the lands which have professed it in history. The answer is not far to seek: if it had really done so for one generation, its movement for expansion would cease; instead, the movement was never so vigorous as now. The history of the Faith would make it old; the renewed experience of it in each generation keeps it always young.

For two major reasons, any religion needs a source in fresh personal experience. (a) Only such experience makes heroism possible, and no religion can long command

allegiance without a call to heroism. Few men do any heroic thing simply because their fathers had certain experiences. In some way they must gain a vivid sense of being the children of their fathers and of sharing the great experiences in their own lives. Unless they are mere hirelings, men do not fight for a land for which they have no personal regard. The love of the land must have entered into the fiber of their own beings. And men do not die for a religion nor surrender everything in the effort to propagate it unless it has laid irresistible hold on their own spirits. Martyrdom does not prove that the martyr is right; he may die for a wrong cause. But martyrdom does prove that the martyr is sincere and that he is terribly in earnest. One cannot argue for the martyr's cause on the basis of his death, but can argue for the martyr himself on that basis. He has found something that is worth more to him than his physical life, something he is more sure of than of his desire to live in the world. There are men who do not understand why American or Western Christians will die for the cause of Christianity in India or China, as not a few have done. But such men do not realize how deep is the personal experience of these Christian believers nor how deep is their love for the lands in whose behalf they died. In all lands, nationals as well have laid down their lives for a faith which they had newly received because it had become more dear to them than life itself.

(b) Nothing but personal experience can explain the long endurance which a vital faith requires of its adherents. Martyrdom is often easier than the abiding loyalty of daily duty. Religion must sustain its believer in the crises of his life, but it must sustain him also in the commonplace demands of his ordinary life. This is especially true of the Christian Faith. One of the greatest Christian poets opens one of his poems with the line: "How

hard it is to be a Christian—hard for you and me!" There are many reasons for the fact, but it has never been pretended that being a true and worthy Christian is easy. When it is remembered that the Founder of the Faith paid for his loyalty by death on a cross, it can hardly be supposed that he would lay out for his followers a smooth path. He forewarned them that there would be hardships in the way. This is true in all lands, not merely lands where Christians are yet few. But there are more Christian believers in the world now than there ever have been before, men and women trying day by day to accept the duties of their Faith and to practice its precepts. This would be impossible to them if their religion were not a vital and personal reality. It sometimes happens that Christian adherents who count themselves believers in one land lose their belief when they go to another land and find themselves set in the midst of non-Christian groups. They then reveal that their faith had not yet become a truly personal one; it was altogether social, depending for its vitality on the social group. Such adherents never form the bulwark of any faith.

Christian believers make much of this element of personal appreciation of great objective realities. A man is not made a Christian by accepting the historical facts of the Christian Faith nor by admiring the heroes of its past. One becomes a Christian only when these historical realities have become dominating forces in his own life. In the later weeks of his life on earth, Christ once asked his disciples about the opinions that had been currently formed about himself; but when they had replied in various terms, he suddenly swung the question upon themselves and said, "But who say ye that I am?" And when one of the disciples replied with a strong confession of faith, Christ expressed great joy in it and indicated that this marked an epoch in his program. Mere general opin-

ion, no matter how accurate, or merely social practice, no matter how correct, may leave the individual untouched. But when the objective realities have become matters of personal experience there is provision for heroic endurance and for aggressive zeal. In a conspicuous place in the city of Oxford, England, is an ornate monument erected as a memorial to three men who were martyred there for their Christian conviction. They died cheerfully, for one reminded the others that the fire that burned them would light a blaze that would never be quenched. It was a small thing to them that they should die. The great thing for them was that their conviction should continue in the world. Such self-surrender would be impossible apart from deep personal experience, and it is just this experience which keeps the Faith alive in the world.

II

Christian experience emerges in two forms. It begins with the first contact of men with the Figure of Jesus Christ, gaining in cumulative force as generations have succeeded in that contact. Its other form is the experience of living believers in this day. Neither the historical mind nor the modern mind can be considered the only one in such a matter. No man can suppose that he has experienced the whole of so great a fact as any religion, certainly not the Christian Faith. He may expect to find his own experience checked, corrected, enriched by the experience of others from earlier times and from his own day. On the other hand, any earnest man is sure to find himself interpreting the experience of history in terms of his own experience.

The two forms of experience have different functions in religion. Recorded, or historical, experience tends to stabilize the Faith, giving check to vagaries and follies. Living, or current, experience tends to keep the Faith vital

and fresh. There is record of a distinguished convert to Christianity which illustrates this fact. Dr. K. C. Chatterjee had been educated under Christian auspices without adopting the Christian Faith. He had naturally learned the accepted phrases of the Faith but merely as expressions of an historical experience. He came, however, to the full and personal acceptance of the Christian religion in his own life. Immediately, as he gives the record, the historical phrases sprang into full life for him. They came to mean to him what they had meant to men long ago when the phrases were new. They were no longer stabilizing terms, the deposit of generations of believing. They became the living realities of a living man. This has happened to many men. On the other hand, the tendency of individual experience to become unsocial and narrow is checked by a wealth of historic experience which has stood the test of time and of varied conditions.

Christian believers call men of other faiths to consider this wealth of historic experience as a contribution to personal life, but they set no standard upon other men, limiting the personal experience they may receive. Each race, each nation, each man, must be left free to receive this rich and germinal Faith in personal ways. Then, having received it, and having found it vital and inspiring, each will find awaiting the wider historical experience which becomes a common heritage of Christian believers.

III

It may be asked whether the experiences of Christians create their conviction or whether instead their conviction creates their experiences. Do they find the Christian Faith true because they wish it to be so, or do they accept it as true because they have found it to be true? The reply is that both are true. In any sphere of life experience and conviction react upon each other, now

one in the ascendancy, now the other. (a) Recall the scientific method. An investigator lights upon a theory, the result of some experience and more speculation. Then he experiments with the theory, acting all the while as though it were true. As the experiments confirm it, his conviction deepens. After a time, experience and conviction become virtually identical, each reacting upon the other. Many times the Christian Faith is compared to the hypothesis of a scientist, because it is a widely accepted working theory of life. There is truth in this figure of speech, if it is not pressed too far. There are working hypotheses in the scientific field which have become assured convictions; they are now taken as established facts. Such a fact Christian adherents hold their Faith to be.

(b) There is no doubt, however, that Christian conviction helps to determine Christian experience in many cases. Indeed, part of the conviction is frankly used to make troublesome experience endurable. Here, for example, is the conviction about God which Christ gave his followers, the conviction that God is a loving Heavenly Father. Now, no Christian finds life just what he would expect it to be in the world of a loving Father. Sorrows and trials, difficulties and dangers, disappointments and denials, are as much his portion as that of unbelievers. A well-known Christian saying is that "all things work together for good to them that love God." But no Christian can pretend that this has yet proved true in his own life, and he knows it has not yet proved true in the lives of those whom he observes. Yet most believers assert it without hesitation, not because they have experienced it, but because their conviction assures them of a principle of life which is involved, and which is greater than any apparent exception to it. If a man looks on the sea and it appears entirely level to him, he does not on

that account consider that it is perfectly level. He knows that in spite of appearances it shares the rotundity of the earth and he corrects his experience by his wider assurance. A Christian believes that a loving heavenly Father controls the world and is able to bring all things into cooperation for the good of those who love him, and that he has already done it in some cases and will ultimately do it in all cases. The conviction corrects the first impression of experience.

(c) However, any corrective conviction must itself be the outcome of experience in clearer and less biased forms. It is the expression of more trustworthy experience, wider, more reliable, less confused by personal consideration. And there frequently occurs a revision of conviction on the ground of undeniable and unexplainable experience. Convictions are apt to become purely intellectual, whereas experience is the expression of the whole personality. When convictions cannot be put into active and helpful practice they lose their value for religion, certainly for the Christian religion. Some one has said, "Christianity is not primarily a thing to be thought about, but a thing to be lived." To be thought about, certainly, but not primarily. And if conviction ever conflicts with actual life, it is sure to be modified. The great central Christian convictions have passed through this test. They have been lived. They are being lived to-day.

(d) This relation between experience and conviction reminds us of another important fact in the Christian Faith—namely, that it claims to be an experience of objective reality. The principal element in Christian belief is not the experience itself but an assurance that this is an experience of something. It is not an illusory idea with no object. It has been tested in many ways. Christian adherents believe the rationality of the universe is involved in its accuracy. The inner life is very real to

the Christian but it has wide implications and contacts with realities lying far beyond itself. God is not conceived as subjective but as objectively real. His existence and character are wholly independent of what men think about him, as the earth is independent in its existence and its laws of what men think about it. The earth was round all the time that men thought it was flat. The sun was a great orb millions of miles from the earth even when men were counting it a small object a few miles away. Their thoughts did not change the objective reality, but they did affect deeply their own relation to life. What we think is very important, but the principal thing is that our thinking shall correspond to a reality which is independent of our thinking but of which we cannot be independent. It is *what* a man experiences, not his mere experience itself, which is vital for the permanence of religion. This is the protection which the Christian Faith has against mere rationalism. The reason becomes an agency of truth, not an originator of truth; it is man's highest power, because it is man's means of discovering truth. It is a seeker, not a maker, of reality. Anselm, an early philosopher of the Faith, expressed the normal attitude of Christian adherents in saying, "It seems to me a failure in reasonable conduct that one who is confirmed in faith should not seek to understand what he believes."

(e) The total content of personal Christian experience cannot be wholly described simply because it is personal. The objective realities with which the Faith is concerned and around which it centers must be the same for all, yet each person experiences their meaning for himself. It is as though a thousand men were set in order surrounding a mountain, each of the thousand facing it in his own position. All will be seeing and considering the same object with equal honesty and eagerness to know it as it is, and yet no two of the thousand will have ex-

actly the same point of view nor get exactly the same idea of the reality. Each will have something to contribute to a total knowledge of the common object, and each will be helped if it should prove possible to take the point of view of many others. Such an illustration may throw light on the differences among equally earnest Christian believers who narrate their experiences. There is an underlying agreement and a surface difference. Since the experiences are of a common reality, they have much in common. Since the experiences are personal, they have wide variety. No attempt is made in this lecture to describe the total Christian experience. There are, however, some elements in all personal experience out of which the perennial conviction of the Christian Faith issues, to which we may now turn our attention.

IV

There are at least five elements in personal Christian experience which are so nearly universal that they may safely be offered to any person who will come into such relation to the Christian Faith as to develop them in his own life. The normal Christian experience includes: *fellowship with God in Christ, freedom from fear, a sense of peace with a holy God, an enlargement of life, and a love for others which is not limited by land or race.* The order of these items is purely arbitrary. Some would put any one of them first in the list, and the record of Christian lives would justify saying of any one of them that it is the central fact. The Christian Faith seeks to bring to its adherents whatever they need for fullness in life. Whether or not they receive its gifts depends on their readiness to receive them. If any man has a sense of need which lies deep in his life, he may come to the Christian religion with assurance that it is the supply of such a need, whether it pertains to his own life or to his relation

to his fellows or to his relation to God. There are millions of Christian believers to-day, and there have been uncounted millions in the generations since the founding of the Faith, who have tested it for the supply of their needs and have found it sufficient. One of the passages in the Bible which has been most often approved in the lives of Christians is that which says that God shall supply every need according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ.

We are now to discuss in fuller detail the five characteristic experiences of the Christian, out of which grows his conviction of the reality of the Christian Faith.

V

1. Christian experience includes a sense of fellowship with God in Christ. In the next lecture we shall consider the age-long quest for God on which the human soul so deeply depends, and we shall then present the Christian conception of God in detail. In the Christian system God is declared to be personal and so to be within human knowledge, though not within human comprehension. Such a conception makes possible the incarnation and the direct contact of God with human spirits. Indeed, this conception shows the truth which underlies all earnest efforts to bring the deity near by means of idols and other images. Few men can be wholly satisfied with the vague, remote deity of pure speculation or the deity whose idea is reached at the end of philosophical argument. They want to think of God as near and helpful. In short, they want fellowship with the God whom they worship.

Christians find such fellowship in Christ as the manifestation, the incarnation of God. A disciple once said to Christ that if he could be sure of the Father he would be satisfied. Jesus at once said to him that whoever had seen him had seen the Father. And men have been find-

ing God in Christ ever since that day. It is not by magic nor in mystery, though it is spiritual. In their knowledge of Christ believers have felt that they know God. He is like Christ; he can be loved and trusted as Christ could be; he can be realized in his nearness as Christ was.

The sense of fellowship with God is not peculiar to the Christian Faith. Many religions have mystics who pass under certain conditions into mystical insight and apprehend God at first hand. These mystical experiences are all broadly alike, usually following the same course whether in the Christian believer or in others. They are authoritative in their field, also, and must always be received with appreciation. However, the Christian Faith rather avoids than seeks them in their usual form. An early apostle had this mystical power and rejoiced in it for himself, but felt that it endangered the true democracy of the Christian Faith unless it was carefully safeguarded. It is not an experience which seems open to everybody, but only to those of a special type of mind. The true and vital experience of fellowship with God which Christ offers is open to all sorts and conditions of men, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, practical and mystical. It grows out of a sense of God's interest in the daily affairs of life. Christ once used the surprising Oriental figure of speech, which may be taken with all literalness, that the hairs of men's heads are numbered before the eyes of God, and that even a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his knowledge. The sense of God's care and concern is not reserved for the selected few, but belongs of right to every Christian believer. It requires no isolation from the ordinary affairs of life, no mysterious practices nor hypnotic exercises but merely acceptance of the reality of Christ and his manifestation of God.

It has not always been easy for Christians to realize the simplicity and naturalness of this fellowship. In

most ages there have been men who felt that they must make of it something mysterious and exceptional. So there have been Christian monks and anchorites, desert dwellers who have sought to find God by going away from the usual haunts of men, becoming holy by becoming separated from men, instead of becoming holy by being separated to God in the midst of men. During the lifetime of Christ he was once contrasted with his forerunner, at just this point. The forerunner, John the Baptist, lived the life of an ascetic, whereas Christ lived a social life. It has never been necessary to get away from life to be worthy of the God of life.

2. Largely because of this fellowship with God, the Christian experience involves release from the sense of fear. An eminent English scholar once said that if he could ask the Sphinx one question it would be this: "Is the universe friendly?" To many men it seems unfriendly.

(a) Savage life is always in dread of evil spirits. Systems of primitive worship are largely devoted to placating angry spirits or defeating the purposes of malevolent or whimsical deities. Even after a much higher stage of religious development has been reached the same fear often appears, and the testimony of many new converts to Christianity is that its largest blessing has been their release from fear of such influences. Strangely enough, the Christian Faith does not deny the existence of spirits, good and evil, but it places them wholly under the control of God, so that they either do his loving will or are constantly checked by that will. In either case, they can do no harm to those who trust God. Part of a familiar hymn, taken originally from the German, expresses most Christian thinking: "And though this world with devils filled should threaten to undo us, we will not

fear, for God hath willed his truth shall triumph through us." Whatever may be said of adverse forces in the universe, they would be subject to personality. If they are personal, then they would be subject in turn to greater personality than their own. The Christian Faith in the personal God, and in the place of personality in the moral order, carries with it the assurance of complete mastery of all adverse forces, whether personal or not. Multitudes of believers have found release from fear by committing themselves to this assurance. So complete has been the release that in the normal Christian mind the whole matter of evil spirits has become academic and negligible.

(b) But the passing of fear of evil spirits does not mean the ending of fear in human life. Every thoughtful man knows that life is full of dangerous elements, elements which hold the future of any day in an unstable equilibrium. Each man is increasingly dependent on forces which he cannot control—other men, even other nations, conditions of the world about him, the physical world of storm and flood and disaster, and the social world of a closely interlocked human interest. Words and deeds may have farreaching consequences. No man can know what the morrow may bring forth. Not even the bravest can keep his heart steady at all times by any power of his own. Either he must have few interests or care little for them, if he does not sometimes dread conditions which may arise. The fact appears even more markedly when one faces the larger conditions of the world as a whole. The plans of wise men go astray, the schemes for protection of men and nations seem inadequate or even trifling. How much damage a misstep or a malevolent decision can do has been sadly proven to us in recent years. Life has become perilously interwoven, so that men in a far nation hold in their hands the destinies and happiness

of our homes. How shall a man face life as it actually is, and not have his hours of fear?

Some release from this persistent or recurrent sense of fear is demanded for efficient living as well as for peace within one's own life. Three proposals have been made for securing steadiness and poise. The first proposal is that one shall withdraw from the dangerous elements of living. Men would go away from society and nations would return to hermit or isolated life. Or else, men would fatuously deny the reality of the adverse conditions and nations would give themselves over to blind optimism. Each would live for his own pleasure, living for the day as though there were no future and no threatening danger in occupations. In one way or another the dangerous elements are to be forgotten and so fear is to be allayed. The second proposal is that of the Stoics. Men are to brace themselves against these evils of life by a kind of cynicism that refuses to be mastered. The evils cannot be escaped, but men can keep their unconquerable souls. They can accept the evils as fate, part of a predetermined order to which they must submit, but always proudly. Many men in all lands pride themselves on this method of facing life. This, it is said, would cure our fears.

The other proposal is that of Christianity. It involves an open-eyed and unhesitating acceptance of life as life actually is, with no suppression of human impulses. But it involves also an assurance of forces greater than the adverse ones, ultimate forces of righteousness—in short, the Christian religion proposes that men escape from fear by faith in the presence and power of a loving and righteous God. There are evils in the world; it is never quite honest to deny their reality. They can break us; we are never quite ingenuous when we deny it. But they are not the ultimate forces and they cannot break us

finally nor ruthlessly. Very early in the history which prepared for the founding of the Christian Faith, one of the heroes dared to exclaim over a supposed course of divine action, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" It has been a keynote of the Christian Faith that God will do right and that righteousness will ultimately win the day.

(1) It is doubtful if the physical universe is ethical or has ethical purposes in itself. Eminent scholars in all nations argue that spiritual ethics has nothing to do with the physical order of the world. That may be so, but it is certain that ethical beings are in the universe, for men are here. They can turn the universe to ethical uses, directing its forces so that they accomplish ethical ends. If they can do so, then the personal God in whom Christians believe can do as much. Moreover, he can take the free actions of other ethical beings and direct them to good ends. If the physical world in itself has no purpose of moral good, God has a purpose of good in which he can include the physical world as well as the actions of human beings. This assurance removes from the Christian mind one of the chief causes of fear. Out of the serious and vexed complications of life an order can be brought—indeed, is being brought.

(2) This method of escape from fear is equally an inspiration to action. It permits no hiding from the grim facts of life nor any evading of responsibility for the evils of the world. God works through agencies, winning his way in the lives of men, if he may, but winning his way *over* the lives of men, if he must. This is not an arbitrary act of will and power; it is the expression of love and reason. One of the stories of the early part of the Bible is of a dire national emergency in which a young woman had the opportunity to help the situation by accepting a serious risk on her own part. An older

relative, urging her to go forward, used the significant words: "If thou altogether hold thy peace at this time, then shall deliverance rise from another place, but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed." There was no question about ultimate deliverance and the execution of the divine purpose. If it could not be done by one instrument it would be done by some other. One of the early apostles of Christ once passed through very adverse experiences in which his heart was much tried, but he declared that he could see in the midst of these experiences the progress of the purpose of God. No man who fairly sees that can be overwhelmed with fear. He may recognize clearly that there will be adverse days, but he will endure them in assurance of the progress of the thing he loves most.

(3) The Christian proposal allays fear and brings courage regarding one's own life. An early incident records the saying of a group of several young men who were about to be killed by religious enemies. They said that their God would be able to deliver them from the fiery furnace into which they were to be thrown and they believed he would deliver them, but even if he did not, they would not do what they felt was wrong. The cost of such failure would be much more than the experience of death. That is not stoicism; it is faith, trust in a good God who is in control of the affairs of the world and the lives of men. The Christian Faith does not admit that men find their real value in advancing some movement that continues after their death. It holds personality on too high a plane for any such admission. A British journal* contains a suggestive prose poem which expresses what many think of life:

**The Nation,* May 17, 1924, "The Broken Tool," by Edward Carpenter.

The broken tool lies:
In the dust it lies forgotten—but the building goes on without delay.
Who knows what dreams it had—this rusty old shaftless thing?
(Or fancied it had: for what it supposed its own thoughts, were they not the thoughts of the artificer who wielded it?—and *his* thoughts, were they not those of the architect?)
Dreams of the beautiful finished structure, white with its myriad pinnacles, against the sky;
Dreams of days and years of busy work, and the walls growing beneath it;
Dreams of its own glory—absurd dreams of a temple built with one tool!
Who knows?—and who cares?
In the dust it lies broken now and unnoticed;
But the building goes on without delay.

This is not the hope of the Christian Faith. God has no discarded tools, thrown aside after their work is done while the building goes on. Each man contributes his part and passes on, but he passes on in an enlarged wealth of personality.

(*c*) And so the Christian Faith helps to end that deepest and last fear—the fear of death and the unknown future to which multitudes of men in all nations are always subject. What does death mean to the individual life? What lies out beyond in that realm to which all men must go whether they will it or not? For the Christian that too is under the guidance of the good and loving Father whom Christ has taught him to trust. Few details are given, but the assurance remains that the fellowship with God and each other which has meant so much here will be even closer and clearer there. An early Christian writer expressed it well in saying that Christ makes life and immortality radiant in the gospel. Almost all men expect a future life. Christ makes it desirable. An American Christian professor, traveling in India, met a young priest of another faith and heard him speak of

the future which his faith held out to him, gloomy and forbidding. He felt himself bound on the Wheel of Life from which he could hope to escape only by many experiences yet to come, after which he would pass into oblivion, which was his desire. The Christian man described the Christian idea of the future, to which the young priest replied, "O yes, if one could expect such a life as that, it would be worth going to, but how do we know any such life exists?" His friend was able to say that at least we can know the Christian idea of the future as reliably as any other idea and more reliably so because Christ has proved so trustworthy a guide in other and provable matters.

Few Christian adherents would claim that their faith has yet been realized in their own lives so fully that they have been entirely released from fear, but they know the power of their Faith and that when they come fully into the realization of it they will know the perfect love that casteth out all fear. The reasons for fear can be driven away from life. It is part of the experience out of which grows the conviction that this Faith is true.

3. A third element in the normal Christian experience is a sense of peace with a holy God. In theory this might be simple enough. In practice it must take account of a universal sense of sin which grows deeper as the assurance of a holy God gains in power. All religions deal with this direful moral disorder, though they have different names for it, different explanations of its origin, different methods for dealing with it. Something is clearly wrong in the moral life. Efforts to explain that wrong by mere heredity or environment have never yet succeeded in a man's most serious moments. Man may be descended from the ape and tiger and may carry with him traces of that ancestry, but he knows that those traces need not

show themselves in his life and should not be allowed to do so. When they do show themselves, there is no excuse in the fact that they were there to begin with. If they were there, it was for the purpose of control, not for purposes of expression. His higher powers were obligated to subdue them; if they are not subdued then he has failed at the highest point of his being. His release of those powers of evil, the sin itself, is his own and not that of his ancestry. An American essayist once said that every man is an omnibus in which all his ancestors are riding. But every man has all kinds of passengers in his omnibus, and it is his own omnibus after all, and he must decide what kind of ancestor will help him to hold the reins.

Explanation of human sin as a result of environment is equally ineffective. Every reasonable man knows the immense power of environment, but he knows also that a true man can select from his environment the kind of forces which shall become dominant in his life. He always sins when he becomes a slave to his environment or to any one group of forces within it. There are ideals written in his nature, established in the very fact of his being human and not something else, toward which he ought to strive. He knows this duty of striving toward worthy ideals if he stops to assert his humanity at all. If he chooses to live like a brute, caring naught about his wide divergence from his true human ideal and duty, then that is itself sinful, for it means leaving out of account the very elements that make him human. In short, any treatment of sin that relieves it of its serious meaning in human life is fatally defective.

In a religion such as Christianity, sin becomes a more serious reality because there is introduced the idea of a personal God against whom the sin is committed. And when a sinful man and a holy God are brought together in thought, there can be nothing but unrest unless definite

provision is made for peace. Two familiar possibilities occur at once. The sinfulness of sin may be minimized, or the holiness of God may be discounted—in either case the condition is relieved. But it is relieved at the cost of clear thinking. The Christian Faith adopts no such device. It sharpens the sense of sin and strengthens the assurance of the holiness of God, and yet it gives to its adherents a sense of peace with God. In a later lecture we are to discuss the Christian way of accomplishing this result. Just now it is enough to note it as a universal element in Christian experience. All who have ever forgiven or been forgiven know that sometimes in purely human relationships there is a close nearness because of forgiveness. It is so in Christian experience. An early Christian writer once bemoaned his sin in terms of the Roman form of punishment, whereby a dead body was bound to the offender; he cried, "Who shall deliver me from this dead body of my sinful self?" And immediately he added, "I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord!" This is not an experience which is earned by self-suppression or by sacrificial practices; it is received in the very acceptance of Jesus Christ as the unique Person of the Christian Faith, and in appreciation of the work which he became incarnate to do. The Christian believer does not arrive at this peace; he is privileged to start with it. Multitudes of believers have found it in their own lives. They have seen in God a love which nowhere conflicts with holiness but in which holiness expresses itself. Trusting that love, with its inspiration to holiness in themselves, they are at peace.

4. A fourth element in Christian experience out of which Christian conviction grows is the enlargement of life which comes from intelligent acceptance of the Christian Faith. Every religion has instances of humble men made great by obedience to its demands. If the Founder

of the Christian Faith was from the home of a carpenter, so was the Founder of the Moslem Faith from the home of a camel driver. One of the first effects of religion is to widen the horizon of its advocates. This widening occurs in two ways—extensively and intensively. (*a*) Every man lives at the center of a series of circles with lengthening diameter. The smallest circle covers the field of his own obviously personal interests—his own ambitions, his advantage, an innermost group for which he counts himself responsible. Some men never go outside this circle and deny responsibility for anything outside. They gauge each demand by its bearing on the inner circle. "What will I get out of it? If nothing, then why should I do it or endure it?" A wider circle includes one's community, perhaps one's nation, and its chief virtue is patriotism of a narrow sort. Many men never go outside this circle of responsibility; they measure every demand by it. When they have done their duty to this circle, their duty is done. One of them voiced the sentiment which multitudes in all lands share: "My country—may it always be right, but my country right or wrong!" Outside of this circle lies no obligation. A still wider circle includes humanity, the universal human interest, wherein the man lives who finds nothing foreign to himself which concerns humanity, wherein are men who become world citizens. There are many to whom this is the ultimate limit of interest or concern. But all consciously religious men realize that there is something more, a circle wider than even this great one—the circle in which one comes into contact with the spiritual forces of the universe and becomes a factor in the program and purpose of God. These widening circles are never independent of each other and each gains in importance and opportunity by loyalty to the wider ones. The Christian religion widens life until it reaches this outermost circle by magnifying

the personality of God and the participation of finite personalities in His purposes. The lesser circles are conceived as fields or stages in which the spiritual life may be expressed, all their interests being best served when they are counted part of a total interest in which God himself is concerned.

(*b*) The intensive widening of life involves the inclusion of increasing numbers of interests in one's sense of obligation. Being a religious man may be expressed in doing a certain series of specified duties, or it may be expressed in a spirit of life which determines all one's life. The history of religion has some bad chapters in which men failed to apply their religious impulses to the whole of life, expressing them in only certain lines. This has always been a temptation to Christian believers and they have often failed here. For example, the Christian Faith is essentially a religion of personality—a personal God on the one side and human personality on the other. It uses institutions and organizations but it magnifies personality. But here its adherents have failed it dismally. Slavery was the disgrace of Christendom until a few decades ago, and slavery is a social condition which has no defense before any intelligent Christian bar. It involves the disregard of personalities, subordinating some to the whims and will of others. The same complaint may be made regarding the evil elements of the modern industrial system, with their subjection of personality to machines or systems. Yet faith in the supreme right of personality is the clue to most of the beneficent movements for social betterment, housing, education, industrial reform, which are now engaging wide attention in Christendom. This unfolding of the implications of the Christian Faith has startled some of its adherents, but there is no mistaking its validity. The social evils of Christendom are serious and disturbing, but they are never connected with the

essence of Christianity; they contradict it. Life is the great object of the Christian religion. Christ said he came that men might have life and have it abundantly. Narrowed, restricted personalities are always a challenge to a sound Christian faith.

But Christian experience brings its adherents into contact with the widest environment by bringing them into fellowship with God and by creating around the entire world a brotherhood of which they become a part. A Christian philosopher has outlined the different methods of maintaining a rich personality in this way:

> The Epicurean says: Take into your life as many simple, natural pleasures as possible. The Stoic says: Keep out of your mind all causes of anxiety and grief. The Platonist says: Lift up your soul above the dust and drudgery of daily life, into the pure air of the perfect and the good. The Aristotelian says: Organize your life by a clear conception of the end for which you are living, seek diligently all means that further this end, and rigidly exclude all that would hinder it or distract you from it. The Christian says: Enlarge your spirit to include the interest and aims of all persons whom your life in any way affects.

This means that for the Christian, enlargement of life comes from more thought of other people, and not from more thought of himself. This becomes a principle of life, which can be tested at many points. As it is tested, it proves to be effective and deepens the conviction that the world is built for service and not for gain. The methods listed under the names of other schools of thought have much merit, but they are often utterly impossible of application. One cannot keep out of his mind all causes of anxiety and grief without deserting his fellows

in the hour of their deepest need. It is impossible to exclude from one's life all the things that distract from pursuit of his one end in life. But one can constantly include the interests and aims of others in one's life if only one wills to do so. Indeed, the very things that so often and so terribly distract the spirit are exactly the interests and aims of other people. We naturally rebel against them, we constantly resent them, unless we take them into our own interest by act of will.

This is a great national principle which Christian nations are slowly learning. The way of national enlargement is not by exclusion of the interests of others but by including them as part of each nation's concern. Patriotism needs a new and more Christian turn. It has been tried for self-defense, for self-development, for self-assertion, and has its merits and its perils. It has not yet been tried whole-heartedly by any nation for service. If a body of patriots should think of their beloved nation as requiring their loyalty because only so can it become the factor in world helpfulness of which it is capable, there would be a new day for patriotism. A society of business men has been organized in many Christian lands, whose motto is, "He prospers best who serves most." If the possible selfishness of the motto is avoided, it is deeply Christian. A true adherent of Christianity must learn to serve most whether he himself prospers or not, but it is one large evidence of the moral soundness of the Christian system that it fits into human needs so closely. Calling men to service, it gives them unsought prosperity. Nations have not yet learned the Christian principle as they must do before the better order of humanity is brought in, but multitudes of men have learned it and have found the enlarged life which is the outcome of true Christian experience.

5. Our discussion has already involved the fifth ele-

ment in Christian experience—love for others. All students of the Christian Faith realize that its fundamental principle is love and that in its theory there are no limits to the application of the principle. The failure of its adherents here has often been ghastly and regrettable. Within limits they have learned much of the practice of true love, but the very setting of limits tends to spoil the beauty of it. *(a)* Its most severe demand is that of love for one's enemies. Anybody can love his friends or those who are part of his natural group, but there are not a few who declare that love of one's enemies is an impossible ideal. An eminent Chinese statesman has praised the Christian ethic highly, but declares that at this point it is impossible. Fortunately, there is clear enough proof of its possibility in the case of Jesus himself. He bore his enemies no malice nor hatred. He would not have had harm come to them. It will not do to say, therefore, that love of one's enemies is an impossible theory. But the case will grow clearer if we attempt a plain definition: *Christian love is open-hearted regard for all men, willing only good to them and ready on any proper occasion to put that will into effective action.* When it is so stated, it is seen to be far deeper than any mere emotion. It roots in the will. And to a man who understands the Christian Faith, anything less than this is unthinkable. No man who follows Jesus Christ could desire for any of his fellow creatures aught but good. Nor could any man be a follower of Christ and not be ready to seize any proper occasion to do good to men. What else should he do?

But there are other groups of men beside one's enemies. (*b*) There is the group which one joins in becoming a Christian—the Christian brotherhood of every name and order. Here also the failure of Christians is confessed with shame. The failure is not universal, of course, for there are many Christians who have accomplished the difficult

feat of loving those who differ from them on points of faith. Religious controversies have always been painful, but religious differences have often been profitable. Any faith that makes use of intellectual conceptions is sure to find differences among its adherents because of their differing points of view. This is not where the Christian Faith is tested. The test comes in maintaining a full spirit of love in the midst of differences. Happily, such love does exist widely among Christians. They constitute the widest brotherhood of the world, among more races than any other, in more classes of society than any other, in a larger geographical area than any other. When a man becomes truly a Christian, he experiences a sense of brotherhood with fellow believers which increases with his knowledge of the meaning of his faith. When that love receives the development it deserves, there will be far less division among Christians than now exists. Toward that good day many Christians from the West hope that believers in the East may lead the way.

(*c*) A third group toward whom Christian experience demands love is the world at large, men of other faiths and nations, men everywhere and of all sorts. Naturally this puts a strain on Christian believers at many points and they have often failed in it, but what they have come to know deepens their conviction that their Faith is true. It is what the world needs. At two points it requires fuller expression and is steadily receiving it in Christian lands, though with much failure. Christian love makes the idea of war ultimately unthinkable and also sets a complete ban on racial antagonism. These are the two outstanding evils of the day in Christendom. It must be said, however, that it is in very recent times that either of them has been considered open to debate. Both have been taken for granted for centuries. Christian believers

claim that it is their own Faith which, at least for them. has made them problems at all.

They have followed the usual course in Christian experience. Three stages ordinarily mark social advance in Christian lands. A certain condition gradually grows or is inherited from the past and is taken for granted without serious discussion. Then, if it comes to be measured by the standards of Christ, specially by his spirit, it ceases to be a matter of course and becomes a problem. It is not easy at first to see the solution of it. Always some think it cannot be solved—that the race must get on with evils and find some way of living in spite of them. But this idea contradicts Christian belief. Nothing evil is necessary in a sound moral order. Presently the evil becomes not merely a problem but an impossibility. It is no longer possible for a Christian to endure it. That was true of slavery, of personal dueling, of gambling. Christian adherents may, unhappily, do all these things, but no Christian can defend them as parts of his religious life. He must do them, if at all, in spite of being a Christian. Rapidly the two great social evils of war and racial antipathy are approaching the final stage with Christian believers. The solution of some of the problems which they contain is not yet known. There is a heavy remainder of tradition and historical theory in both subjects. It is impossible now to see how the way out is to be found. But increasingly it becomes apparent that between true Christian love and either war or racial hatreds or a permanent status of inferiority there is a hopeless antithesis. Since that is true, the Christian Faith is pledged to the destruction of both. It may be, it doubtless will be, a long campaign, but Christian believers cannot admit that any evil is necessary in the relations between men. For the first time in history there seems to be a serious facing of these two terrible evils. The values which they represent

are to be conserved, but they themselves must disappear before the realization of the real logic of Christian love.

VI

Such are some of the elements of Christian experience out of which the Christian conviction springs. As was said at the first, the conviction helps to develop the experiences, but no man will stand bravely for the conviction who has not had the experiences. A recent Christian writer names four tests of religious beliefs which seem fair and binding: 1. Are the beliefs logically satisfying, more so than the opposite beliefs? By this test the Christian experiences have the mark of truth. The negation of any one of the five named would make for poorer living and leave the world less logical and satisfying for the moral life. 2. Are the beliefs morally fruitful? Here again it is only fair to urge that the character that would be maintained by full acceptance of and loyalty to the Christian experiences would be the character the world needs. 3. Are they proof against "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune?" That is, will they bear the test of adversity both in themselves and in the lives of their adherents? It is a severe test—the test of stormy weather for the boat, of the floods and rains for the foundation of the house. But many religious ideas can meet it, the Christian Faith surely among them. For has not that Faith its fair share of the martyrs of emergency and the martyrs of the long and hard grind? 4. Are the beliefs a source of power and health to mind and body? Do they make of each man the best he might become and do they offer to society its fullest development? Much of this must be discussed later, but now it is humbly argued that the Christian Faith will meet this test also.

All this means that the Christian conviction is not merely an historical conclusion. It is also and even more a

daily experience by which and for which men are living. Christians offer their faith to the world not because of its history, but because they find it a present joy and inspiration, a present rebuke to everything unworthy in themselves, the source of experiences which lift their lives. They would not be true to the love which their Faith forms in them if they did not offer it to other men for its wide and fine outlook on life. Much of the worst of Christendom is given to other lands. Shall not the best be given as well?

Chapter IV

THE CHRISTIAN CONVICTION REGARDING GOD

In the earlier lectures we have discussed the two sources of the Christian Faith—its initial origin in history in a unique Person and a unique Book, and its perennial origin in the vital personal experience of Christian believers. We come now to the discussion of some of the central and dominating ideas of Christianity, on the basis of which it offers itself to the world.

A religion is always to be tested by its answers to a fourfold question: What does it teach about God, about man, about the relation between God and man, about the relation between man and man? All faiths offer teaching on each of the four points. It is this that lifts them into the realm of religion and widens them beyond the field of ethics. On this account all the major religions have some things in common; they cover the same general field. For example, all affirm the existence of something that may be described as God; all assert the moral and rational nature of man; all prescribe some way of bringing salvation from the effect of sin in the individual and some way of bringing about right relations among men. Every religion leads to some sort of ethical theory, for in one sense religion is merely a way of living—living with reference to God and living with reference to other men. Christianity, like any other religion, is a distinctive way of living. But this implies that it must have distinctive ideas about God and

man and their relation, since human relationships are always affected or determined by these ideas.

As its name implies, Christianity is essentially a Faith from and regarding Christ. This is illustrated in the Christian idea of God, which is derived from and measured by Christ, partly in what he taught and partly in what he was himself.

I

The idea of God is the central fact of religion, influencing or determining all other ideas. It measures the dignity of any religion. There are several instances in history when effort was made to establish or maintain religion on the basis of atheism or agnosticism, but always with one of two results; either the decay of the religion or the introduction of the theistic idea under some other form. The theoretical possibility of an atheistic religion might be discussed; its practical or historical feasibility is out of the question.

There are many ideas of God in the world. They range from crude forms of animism and superstition to the lofty conceptions which appear in the highly ethical faiths of the world. As the theistic idea advances, its problems increase. The most serious problems of theism emerge with the assertion of the highest conception of deity, never with the lowest conceptions. But this is true of all intellectual progress. The primitive savage with his simple ideas of the world about him, ignorant of its vastness, unconscious of its complexity, knows no such intricate problems as beset the intelligent physicist who seeks to understand the universe. A keen observer of intellectual history has remarked that the answer to any serious question about the universe brings at least two more questions into sight, adding, "We are becoming more and more learnedly ignorant." This is equally true in the field of

theism; the higher the conception rises the more wide-reaching are the problems involved.

Over against all ideas of God may be set a fundamental question: whether the human mind can know God? Is not God of such a nature, if he exists at all, and is his being not necessarily so vast, that the human mind cannot receive dependable knowledge of him? And if the mind cannot know him accurately, ought it to claim any knowledge of him at all? The answer is not far to seek. If we must know a reality completely in order to claim to know it at all, then we cannot know God. But in that case we cannot know anything, and the real need is for a new definition of knowledge. There is no possible object regarding which we can claim complete knowledge either in its nature or in its relationships. An English poet laureate once said that he could hold a flower in his hand, root and all, but if he could know all that it really involves he would then know that God and man are. Every fact is rooted in the universal reality. There is no object so small that we can know all about it, but there is no object so great that we cannot know something that is true about it. The human mind has the capacity for recognizing reality, for knowing truth, and though it cannot exhaust the meaning of any single instance of reality, it can apprehend truth as it is manifested in any reality. This is entirely compatible with a clear realization of the fragmentary nature of the knowledge, more markedly fragmentary in some cases than in others. An early Christian writer said regarding life in general, "Now I know in part—in part, but still—I know." Knowing God only in part is real knowledge. A Scotch religious philosopher has expressed the Christian idea in these words:

> Hopeless and universal indeed would be our ignorance if that can never claim to be knowledge which

> is not perfect knowledge. In that case, we are not only incapable of knowing God but also our fellowmen and ourselves. For who will contend that he has fathomed the depths of a single human heart or that the philosophy of the human mind contains for him no insoluble problem? If then we feel that we do know something of our brother, though we cannot know all, we conclude that our knowledge of God may be real though it cannot be exhaustive.

The greatest capacity of the human mind is not its power of adapting physical means to end—animals also have that power; nor its power to respond to physical stimuli—animals also make such response; but its power to respond to ideas and ideal situations, to foresee and be commanded by a condition which does not exist but may be made to exist by alliance with a power above itself, an unseen, spiritual power. To say that man cannot apprehend God would be to say that man's supreme power is deceptive. He has always been at his best when he has most fully realized himself as a spiritual force in a world at whose head is spiritual power. And it does not matter whether he reaches the idea of God from within or receives it from without, for in a rational world the movement may start at either end. If the necessities of his own soul require a God, then there is proof of the rationality of the world when his need is supplied by finding a God; and if God is making himself known to man and arousing his sense of need, then there is again proof of the rational order in which man finds himself. Man and his environment together reach the idea of an apprehendable God, though the God apprehended may not be comprehended in fullness. The Christian conviction is of a God who may be known, who has manifested him-

self to men that they may know him, and with whom a man may have fellowship.

Such a Being cannot be defined, but some description of the conception is possible. The Christian Faith has no recognized and final statement which is imagined to exhaust the meaning of experience with God, but all thoughtful adherents of the Faith have convictions which may be united into a phrasing with which most of them would agree. Amid all these descriptions, these elements are generally to be found: The Christian Faith teaches that there is an infinite Being whom man ought to worship, who is rational, moral and benevolent—a Person; who holds such relation to men that he is best described as Father; who is beyond the world and yet within it; and who reveals himself in nature, in the experiences of men, and notably in Jesus Christ. To most Christian adherents, any such description seems much too cold and distant. They would be better satisfied to say that God is the loving heavenly Father of whom Jesus taught and who makes himself known in Christ. To the Christian, God is like Christ. As a modern Christian scholar has phrased it, "God is an almighty and omnipresent Christ." That is, God is throughout all the universe what Christ showed himself to be during his earthly life. The Christian knows who God is by studying Christ. And the ordinary Christian, even though most scholarly, is not baffled by the thought of the infinite God being manifested in a human being, for if God is infinite in power he must surely have power to make himself known where and how he will. One of the early writers spoke of the divine Christ as "emptying himself" that he might become man. He laid aside those divine grandeurs which would overbear the human spirit and accepted humbly the limitations of his own creation. The whole Christian conception of God rests on the assurance that God is able to do this and

is loving enough to do it for the sake of making himself known to men and of saving them. With the Absolute of philosophy Christianity has little concern. Its concern is with a God who has made himself known in relation to men, who has yielded his absoluteness so far as was needed in order to become real to men. Some religions have finite gods, limited by conditions which they cannot control, finite by origin and in activity. Christianity knows no such God. The God whom it worships and loves is infinite in himself and loving enough to accept for himself for a time the limitations of finiteness, that he may come near to men whom he loves and whose fellowship he desires. All his limitations are self-imposed and voluntarily assumed.

II

Large volumes have been written in the effort to express the Christian idea of God in its fullness, but here we venture to state the heart of that idea in a single sentence. *The Christian conviction is that God is a holy, loving Father, who creates, sustains and directs all things.* Such a sentence seems to reach the core of the fuller descriptive statement just presented. Two important remarks are suggested by the latter part of the sentence.

1. How God creates, sustains and directs all things is a question of science and not of religion. Scientific men are discussing the method whereby the present natural order came to be. The outcome of that discussion is not of essential importance to religion. Whether the later idea of a prolonged process of unfolding forces or the earlier idea of creative fiat should prove the true one may be safely left to workers in this department of knowledge. The Christian Faith is concerned with the matter at only two points: *(a)* Whatever may be discovered to be the process of creation or control, it is to be accepted as a

process and not as a sufficient cause. God is not to be eliminated on merely scientific grounds, when physical science as such cannot cover the field in which religion finds God. *(b)* When the universe is explained by a scientific theory, it must be the universe as it actually is and not a theoretical universe made to fit the theory. If the application of any theory requires, for example, that the moral or volitional nature of man be explained away or canceled in order to carry out the logic of the theory, then religion enters a protest. This has happened when human freedom and moral responsibility are denied because a mechanistic theory collides with them. In the same way the spiritual nature of man has sometimes been reduced to meaningless words in the interest of a materialistic scheme of the universe. When either of these errors is committed, the protest of the Christian Faith is not against evolution but against atheism and materialism. There is no conflict whatever between evolution and Christianity, but there is an inevitable conflict between atheism and Christianity and between materialism and Christianity. In a few moments we shall return to this point, but here it is mentioned for the sake of clearness.

2. The Christian Faith understands that God sustains and controls all things according to the nature of the things controlled. He does not control inanimate things as he controls animate ones, nor these as he controls rational, personal beings. Men are not animals nor things and they are not controlled as these are. Christianity sees all these realities as the creation and work of God and their natures as his gifts. It declares that God continues loyal to his own creative work, dealing with all things in ways that are suitable to them. Much of the problem that seems involved in the question of human freedom and divine control arises from overlooking this fact. The control of God over rational beings is suited to the nature of those

beings; it is not a control of force nor of arbitrary power. For this reason men have large liberty to refuse divine control, and within wide limits are able to go contrary to God's wish for them. Since they continue to be his creatures and to be part of his universe, his ultimate control is never released. At the long last he maintains his own universe and all its elements. But it is not baffling to the Christian Faith to observe the slow process whereby the moral will of God is executed among moral beings. Personality cannot be forced as impersonal things can be forced. It must be won, appealed to by motives suitable to its nature. This is the method of the control of God. He is sovereign, but he exercises his sovereignty in harmony with his own work in creation. He governs as a Father governs, with all patience and persistency, in constant regard for the development of his children, never forsaking his right to control and never forcing it by mere acts of power. However it is done, God is always in control.

With these two remarks regarding the latter part of the statement above, we pass to the consideration of its earlier half.

III

Central in the Christian conception of God is his personality. The fact of divine personality is asserted by several other faiths, but the Christian idea has certain distinctive traits which we must discuss as we go on. An eminent Cambridge scholar reminds us that we must ask "what a religion makes of God, whether it speaks of him in the singular or the plural, the neuter or the abstract. And here we shall find that progress more and more depends on the personality of God—that this militates against polytheism and safeguards the personality of man and all the morality bound up with the society of men.

God's personality and man's personality are going to stand or fall together." Notice that this declaration of the personality of God involves refusal to identify God with the universe or to count him merely the power that operates the forces of the world. No personal being, like man, could worship any being who is less than personal. We may be in great fear of force or may stand in amazement at the vastness of the universe, but we can never love or worship mere power or vastness or an accumulation of forces. We cannot commune with anything that is not personalized before us. It is noticeable that the great nature poets in all faiths always address nature or any of its elements in personal terms. Only so can the human reason consent to commune with them. If there is a God to be worshipped, he must be a personal being.

Two other ideas are often set against this. (a) One idea makes God merely our highest concept, including the universe and ourselves, sometimes a social concept, sometimes a mechanical one, finding all personal elements in him merely the reflection of personality in ourselves. But we must observe that this reduces worship to a persistent illusion, destroying its moral element. If there is not a real personal element in the object of worship and yet we must consider it personal before we can worship it, then we are forced to unreality in order to be religious. But this would mean that religion is an immoral force, leading the moral nature into unreality. Historically this is simply not the case. There have been degraded forms of religion, intimately connected with forms of immorality, but these have been no essential part of religion itself. The highest religions are intimately connected with the highest forms of ethics. Deceit and unreality are farthest from their influence. Poets can personalize nature and its powers because those powers are rationally established and controlled. If there were no reason in the universe none could be found

there. A rational being can stand before a disordered heap of rubbish and classify its contents according to any scheme in his own mind, but always subject to its inner reality. He cannot stand before a heap of metal and rationalize it into a musical symphony. He cannot stand before a group of disorganized musical notes and turn them into a steamboat or a sailing vessel. If there were not rational elements in the natural order, no poet could find them there nor fall into rhapsodies over them. The Christian conception of a personal God is required by the fact of worship among rational beings. Personality can never fall before impersonality without degrading itself. But religion, so far from degrading humanity, elevates it to its noblest levels. Man's hours of sincere worship are his highest hours.

This is the answer also to those who count religion merely a passing stage in human development. They count it worthy of a pre-scientific era, but foredoomed to disappearance with the advance of that era. In that case, the highest expression of humanity must cease with the coming of science. He who has worshiped personality, himself being personal, must in that case cease to worship at all, and so cease to express himself at his highest; or else he must worship powers and forces lower than himself, for even the entire universe, if it is impersonal, lacks the highest traits of human personality. Man can know and feel and love and do right and wrong. The object of his worship must be able to do at least as much as this. But the universe, no matter how great, the mechanical order of nature, no matter how fine, the forces of vitality, no matter how varied, cannot know, nor feel, nor love. Only personality can do this. If God is not personal, he cannot be worshiped, and if man cannot worship, he cannot reach his own heights.

(b) The other opposing idea is that calling God per-

sonal limits him and so is unworthy of him. It is suggested that we should call God superpersonal or allow him to be undesignated, lest we limit him. Now, as a matter of fact, the highest idea of reality that we possess is that of personality. A Christian philosopher has reminded us that it is in his personality that man is least limited. Man is limited physically and his body limits his mental action, but in the distinctive traits of personality his limitations are least observable. There are no visible limits to the power of knowledge or of feeling or of loving or of apprehension of right or wrong. He suggests that it is God who is unlimited personality and is therefore the one true Person of the universe, man having merely a shadow or hint of the true personality which he has received from God. It may be further urged that no man has any idea of the meaning of superpersonal. We know in part at least what "personal" means, and we know what "super" means, but when the words are put together we do not know any meaning for them. It is as if we should say super-round. We know what "round" means and we know what "super" means, but super-round conveys no intelligible meaning. That is because "personal" and "round," each in its own sphere, represents the ultimate idea of that sphere for our minds. If we mean that God's personality is superior to our own, then the idea expresses only a commonplace of Christian thinking. Of course that is so. God is perfectly personal, while we are imperfectly so. But if God is superpersonal, then we have no intelligible idea about Him. The phrase may be an expression of humility on our part, but it is not a sound confession of faith in a God whom we may worship and love. A Western philosopher has remarked that the choice is not between a personal God and something lower, but between a personal God and something higher. But this involves a choice between an intelligible theism and

an unintelligible one, between a God who means something to man and a God who means nothing to him. The Christian Faith takes its place definitely with the idea of a personal God.

In so far as personality limits God, we must notice again that for the Christian Faith an absolute God, with no traits and no relation to other beings, can have no interest. If it requires limitation on the part of God for us to know and love and worship him, then we are sure that the limitation exists because he does allow us to know him and love him and worship him. We do not believe it involves any limitation except that of his own loving nature, making itself known to his creatures.

IV

One necessary mark of personality is rationality. It is a comforting element in the Christian belief in God that he is a being of reason and that both the world and his relation to mankind indicate his rationality. (a) During the past seventy-five years great changes have occurred in Christendom in the outlook of thoughtful men on the physical world. Near the opening of the modern scientific era there appeared the broad doctrine of evolution as the method whereby the world came to its present form. It is not now, and never has been, a doctrine of origins but only of order. It does not explain the first appearance of the world, and it has not yet an accepted theory of the organization of its elements into their present form. In the narrow sphere of animal life, there is no agreement on the origin of species of animals nor on the time of the appearance of man in the total order. These incomplete developments of the theory do not, however, introduce into most scientific minds any serious doubt of the essential truth of the theory itself. The evidences of development and of the origin of each species in some rela-

tion to others have become overwhelming to most scientists. The first appearance of the doctrine led to extremes of enthusiasm and it was acclaimed in some quarters as the death of religion. But its soundest adherents took no such position. A group of eminent scientists in America last year joined a similar group of eminent religious leaders in a joint statement which includes this paragraph:

> It is a sublime conception of God which is furnished by science, and one wholly consonant with the highest ideals of religion, when it presents him as revealing himself through countless ages in the development of the earth as an abode for man and in the agelong inbreathing of life into its constituent matter, culminating in man with his spiritual nature and all his God-like powers.

The first signer of this declaration on the scientific side is the President of the National Academy of Science, who is also President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and also head of the Smithsonian Institution of Washington, the government scientific institution. The declaration involves the agreement of the new scientific conception of the universe with the Christian conception of a personal God. There are many who feel that the evolutionary idea involves more, rather than less, evidence of the rationality of the universe. It is not yet proved true, but if it should be so, then it will remind us of the age-long wisdom of God, guiding the universe toward worthy ends. Evolution or fiat creation or any other process is merely the way in which God made and maintains and orders the universe. We are not told how he did it or does it, but are left to seek that truth under his guidance. When we find his method, we must be careful not to lose him whose method it is. A Christian writer has said recently that when we find out how a thing is

done we should not suppose that therefore nobody did it.

(b) This is equally so regarding the modern mechanistic view of the universe and of life. If it denies the reality of personal power and such degree of freedom in the universe as personality requires in order to be itself, it is not true to the facts of life. But in so far as it is merely an account of the universe as it may be observed through microscope and telescope, it need not be disputed. The mechanism of the world is not an explanation of its own origin nor of its direction. When science discusses the world which it sees it is wholly commendable, but when it encloses that world within purely physical or mechanistic envelopes it robs the world of its finest values. It is exactly where human reason makes its great leap beyond the seen and heard and felt that it is noblest. Nothing in a sound mechanism forbids recognition of a mechanic or a mover to whom all the mechanism and motion owe their force and continuance. This personal force behind and within the mechanism or the development is, in Christian belief, the loving heavenly Father of Christ's teaching. The very possibility of science is evidence of the rational element in nature. Science is a record of discovery, not a story of invention. It tells what order and system and meaning have been found in nature. As Huxley said, science is most like the true Christian Faith in its requirement that a scientist shall be like a little child in his humility, sitting humbly before nature to learn the facts, imposing nothing out of his own mind. But any scientist would be sure to-day that there is a discoverable order in nature. It is rationally organized and rationally ordered. Much of the order is only dimly known as yet and the great reality back of the order is even less known. Recently the University of Glasgow celebrated the centennial of the birth of the late Lord Kelvin, whose knowledge in natural science brought much

honor to the University. During that celebration, on several occasions reference was made to his great humility. His words at his fiftieth anniversary as a professor of natural science were quoted:

> One word characterizes the most strenuous of the efforts for the advancement of science that I have made perseveringly during fifty-five years; that word is failure. I know no more of electric and magnetic force or of the relation between either, electricity and ponderable matter, or of chemical affinity, than I knew and tried to teach to my students of natural philosophy fifty years ago in my first session as Professor.

Perhaps that is too strong a word for these days of electrons and radium force, but its spirit is that of great scientists the world around. They know the universe is rational but they are only slowly working out its order.

(c) It is a large element in the faith of the Christian that this rationality governs all of his own experiences which are often so baffling to himself. He cannot discover the reasons for what happens to him, but he is so sure of the rationality of God that he knows there are reasons, and that if he could know all of them he would accept them as just and kindly. One of the writers preceding the Christian Faith expressed it in familiar words: "Though He slay me, yet will I put my trust in Him." The reasons of God may often be as far beyond our grasp as the reasons of parents are beyond the grasp of small children, yet as children learn to trust their parents, so men can learn to trust God, not in stoical acceptance of His almighty will nor in cynical acceptance of a fate which cannot be escaped, but in assurance of reason and order in the universe because of a personal, rational God.

(d) Moreover, this assurance of the rationality of the

universe gives courage for the correction of evils which have appeared in it by reason of the sin and ignorance of men. There is no evil now in the world which is not the outcome of forces which can be discovered and corrected. The universe does not contradict itself. It does not destroy itself if it is rational. When, therefore, it appears that a certain thing is evil, there is an assurance that it can be destroyed and set right in the fact that the universe is rational and right at heart.

V

Another mark of personality is morality. This means rational righteousness. Sometimes it is set over against love, as though God must be thought of as sometimes loving and sometimes just. No such distinction is legitimate. All true love is righteous, and all true justice is loving. The Christian Faith lays heavy accent on the fact of the righteousness of God. The suggestion that God may be "above morals," having or being such a law unto himself that the morality of finite beings has no application to him, is doubtless intended to suggest the greatness of God, but it does so at cost of his character as a personal being. There can be nothing which it is right in principle for God to do which would not be right also for man to do. God's wisdom and power so surpass those of finite beings that the temptation is strong to suppose that his morality surpasses that of man, but on any sound theory morality is a qualitative matter and cannot be surpassed. It may be better or more poorly expressed, but in itself it is of one essential quality. The final word is said when a being is called moral; in the field of character there is no meaning in being "above morality."

For a good man it is not worth while to believe in a God who is not holy and pure and righteous. Indeed, such a man cannot long continue to believe in any such

God. That is one reason why some faiths lose their adherents. They are better themselves than the gods they are called to believe. Over against this the Christian Faith sets an ideal of a God of spotless holiness whose righteous character is a constant challenge to all sinful lives. The early patriarch has already been quoted, with his daring demand that the Judge of all the earth must do right.

This necessary element in the Christian conception brings with it one of its greatest difficulties. How can a perfect God govern such an imperfect world as this? The existence in the world of evil, moral evil, sin, is one of the problems of the ages. We are to discuss it more fully in a later lecture, but it must be briefly considered here. (a) The origin of evil has been much discussed. Some faiths have counted it as eternal as good, seeing in the world a constant duel between the two forces of good and evil. Some modern believers find it nothing but a continuance of the struggle from the lower life upward, all men bringing up from the lower levels something of the ape and tiger which is still unsubdued. Some late believers count it all an illusion, purely a matter of the mind, impossible of reality because of the goodness of God which could not permit its existence except in human thinking.

None of these treatments of the existence of moral evil has proved satisfactory to Christian belief. Moral evil is a ruinous element in life which cannot be intended to be eternal. It is an extraneous factor which is not at home anywhere in the order of humanity. It is too forceful in itself to be a mere illusion, and as we have noted, its actual evil is not explained by the possible remainder in humanity of traits of the brute. If those traits are meant to be subdued, why are they not subdued? That is exactly the meaning of sin. Something is going on that should not go on. It does not much matter what it is,

when it is ruining the nature of man as that nature ought to be.

(b) The Christian Faith finds the root of sin in the human will. It is the outcome of choosing wrongly in the presence of a demand of God. It is an outcome of human liberty. Much of the discussion of its origin is beside the point. It is spoken of as though it were a thing. Men ask if God made it. As a matter of fact, no one made it for it is not a thing to be made. It is a condition of a will. There is no moral evil apart from a will that can choose. When the time came that human wills faced their duty in the moral world and refused to do it, sin became a reality. No new fact emerged, but a new condition of a will. The real problem lies in the existence of wills with any degree of freedom. In a universe where free wills are permitted, there must be a possibility of moral evil. Should there be any such universe? The reply must be personal to each of us. Freedom of will is so priceless a possession that a universe which contains it is better, even though sin may come into it, than a universe could be without it. For where evil is not possible, good is not possible either. It is not necessary that evil actually exist in order to the existence of good, but the possibilities of the two run side by side. In order to be morally good, any will must be free to choose the good, but if it is free to choose the good it must be free to choose the evil. The presence of moral evil in the world is not a denial of the morality or righteousness of God. It is rather an assertion of the freedom of man. Its continuance in the world is a testimony to the integrity of God, in that he maintains man in the freedom which he gave to him originally, continuing to maintain him in it though he misuses it. Moral evil bears witness to the moral nature of both man and God—its reliability in God and its abuse in man. An early apostle supports this teaching with his

record of the presence in himself of what seemed two men, one choosing good, the other choosing evil. It was a matter of his will, divided, distracted, uncentered. But he knew the outcome. Through Christ he would yet be brought to the triumphant choice of righteousness and the refusal of moral evil.

(c) It is not proved that the world is imperfect apart from the evil of human wills. In so far as it is still developing toward some better end it will appear imperfect, but it may be perfect for the stage in which it is. When men are building a cathedral it is imperfect from the point of view of the completed building, but the architect and the builder and the laborers may be greatly pleased with it each night as they go to their rest because it is so exactly what they wish it to be at the present stage of its erection. This world, so far as its moral condition is concerned, may be well considered a stage for the development of human character. From that point of view it is a sound and right world. Moral characters in it are deeply defective, often terribly wrong, but that need be no discredit to the order apart from them. And there can be little doubt that the present world is more markedly on the side of moral character than we usually think. It is really not a good world to be bad in. The forces of morality and the forces of the physical universe are closely allied. Men who violate moral laws find their punishment at the hand of nature as well as of sound society. Intemperance is both a moral and a physical evil. Falsehood will destroy a man in the physical as well as in the moral order. The two orders are not the same, but they have close likenesses. At any rate, until we know more of the actual working of natural laws and more of the meaning of the order of the world we cannot count it such an imperfect world that its control by a perfectly moral God is a puzzle.

(d) As to the permission of moral evil in the present

order, we have the clue already. Morality cannot be forced. If the world is to be governed on a moral and personal basis at all, it must be with a measure of freedom. It is notable that the later mechanistic theory of life is required to change the whole tone of its moral teaching. For that theory personal responsibility must be entirely abandoned or re-worded so that it means something different. If God is a person, then moral persons must find their way to fuller morality by the use of their liberty. That is the way in which families are trained. Why does not a good God intervene to prevent floods and plagues and wars and other evils? A finite being may not hope to give a final answer, but some things seem fairly clear. If God did intervene, there would soon be a weakening of humanity which would be a dear price to pay for the escape. Men are stronger for their fight against natural odds. They are safer for their discovery through experience that immorality is ruinous. When boys are always being prevented by others from doing wrong, they lose their personal character. They must be taught rationally that evil is hurtful. Parents are not always intervening. Teachers are not always preventing pupils from errors. Rulers are not always hindering their subjects from doing unworthy things. There are only some methods whereby such interference is legitimate. We do not know, but it may easily be that God is using all the methods which wisdom counts legitimate to control the evil of the world. All this must be said in humility. We do not know why evil is not more violently controlled in the universe, but we do see that such results as we have named may come from God's attitude toward it. So, even in the presence of the moral evil of the world, the Christian view of God as perfectly moral and righteous can be maintained.

V

The central element in the Christian conception of God is his love. It is the distinguishing characteristic of the gospel of Christ. The idea is too vital to be fully defined. When the first Christian writers tried to express what they understood by the love of God and the love which they were to bear to each other, they could find no word adequate and one was made from a familiar Greek root for the purpose. The same difficulty has appeared in several languages. The love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind. One of the earliest erroneous teachings against which the Christian Faith had to contend was that there must be two Gods—one who had made the universe, severe, unloving, exacting in his justice, unmerciful; and another God whom Christ revealed, a loving Father, merciful and forgiving, tender and helpful. The Christian Faith in its very earliest forms refused to accept any such distinction. There are not two Gods. The only God is the loving Father of whom Jesus spoke. But of course this brings to any thoughtful mind one of the gravest problems which the Christian Faith must meet when it asserts the love of God and yet declares his control of the world, namely, the existence in the world-order of pain and suffering. Among men, love seeks to shield its loved ones from pain and sorrow. Mothers, even in the animal order, will sacrifice their own lives for their young; they will do it much more freely in the human order. And yet in the universe there is great sorrow, pain, suffering. How should this be in the world of a loving God?

Part of the answer is the presence of moral evil in the world. That will be sure to produce suffering in any sound moral order. Pains of conscience, sense of unworthiness, the punishment of ill-doing, need give us no concern just now. No parent can be loving who does not

permit such suffering when wrong-doing has occurred. It would be the denial of love to prevent the results of sin in the hearts of men when those results are the warning voice of nature against an evil way. And it would be a denial of a rational order if good and bad conduct brought the same results. But, sad as these pains are and deep as they run, they are not the problem before us when we assert the love of God. Unlike moral evil, the pain of the world often smites wholly irresponsible beings, merely sentient beings, like animals, as well as human beings. Meanwhile, there are multitudes of little children and other human beings who suffer great and long-continued pain, while every life is marked by sorrow, and grief appears among all men. It is a fact for every nation and must be faced by every religion, but notably by a faith which asserts that the God whom it worships is one of love.

(a) So far as suffering appears among animals, it is quite certain that its amount and severity are much less than they seem to human beings. The conduct of wounded animals and the experience of human beings injured in the ways to which animals are liable confirm this belief. There is doubtless lacking in them also the element of resentment which so marks the suffering of human beings, specially when they feel that they are not directly to blame for their pain. But the principle remains the same. The pain is there and it seems out of place in the world where love reigns. Something may be said of the fact that physical suffering is the result of a misuse or abuse of the sentient system, and we are again brought to the argument which was used regarding moral evil. A nervous system which can register pleasure by its excitation will certainly be capable also of registering pain if it be misused, and the only warning that can be given of its misuse is in the pain which accompanies such a condition.

When an oculist was testing a patient whose optic nerve seemed to be destroyed, he darted a ray of light into the eye on an electric current, and when the patient cried out in pain, he said, "Thank God!" for it proved that the nerve was not dead. If it could suffer, it was alive. If it could not suffer, it could not be made to rejoice in seeing. At any rate, we do not know any way whereby a nervous system could be made to serve the needs of animal life either safely or satisfactorily without the danger of pain. Moreover, it is easy to see that physical pain can be accompanied by spiritual emotions either like or unlike it, showing that the two have no necessary connection. If a man foolishly or recklessly thrusts his hand into the flame, it is burned, and the burn brings with it physical pain accompanied by a sense of shame and ill-desert. But if the same man burned his hand in a heroic rescue of a child from a burning building, the physical pain would be the same, but it would be borne as a badge of honor. If it should eventually appear that pain in the world serves moral ends or even social ends, it would be easy to justify it in a sound moral and loving order.

(b) It is certain also that pain and sorrow have their large part in human life in widening human sympathy and creating wider fellowship. One of the elements in the life of Christ which endears him to his followers is his endurance of pain. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He shared the sorrows of others, he relieved their pain and gave them back their liberties, lost in suffering. In the hour of his own great crisis he passed through the depths of anguish. His followers have often been sustained in their own sorrow and suffering by his example, and by feeling that they too may contribute to the good of the world as they see he did. One of these followers wrote in the early days, "I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is

lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." This is the high art of converting suffering into triumph, by connecting it with the experience of God himself. The Christian idea of God as a loving Father utterly forbids any thought of him as passive, sitting remote from the struggles and sufferings of humanity. A God who does not suffer with his people could never command their love. Men whose lives have never been touched by sorrow always lack a note of sympathy which would give power to their contact with other men. When a heart knows pain it grows broader. It may well be worth while to permit sorrow and suffering if that permission results in such widened living. But, of course, no such explanation shows why some other method of gaining the result might not have been discovered.

(c) Another use of the presence of sorrow and pain in a moral world is in their developing the spirit of personal mastery. Endurance has its large place in character. We have already mentioned two types of heroism. One is the heroism of the emergency, readiness to meet a sudden demand even at the cost of life, grace to meet a sudden need. This is the heroism of martyrdom. History is richer for its existence. But the other type of heroism is more frequent and less noticeable. It is the heroism of the long pull, readiness to undertake the difficult, unpleasant task and hold on at it, grace in the grind which seems unending but which one could escape if one demanded escape. This takes a permanence of will that may not be required in martyrdom. And this explains why some martyrs are nobler in their deaths than they were in their lives. They had the heroism of the emergency without the heroism of the commonplace. But, for the development of this high heroism of endurance, nothing is equal to the presence of sorrow and limitation.

(d) The Christian Faith makes much of another element in the situation—the eternal life for which this present life is only an introduction. This could never compensate for the smallest injustice in the pain of the present life, but its reality may help to explain how a loving God may permit or secure experiences whose result appears in the later life. If this life is a school for eternity, then there might be in it experiences such as all students know in common life, experiences which would be utterly mysterious if there were not a purpose in them which would be fulfilled in life after school discipline is over. An early Christian writer expressed the matter in this way: "Our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." It is not the Christian idea that eternal realities are entirely in the future. Instead, they exist and are being served in this present time. The things which endure are the invisible ones and they are served by experiences of pain and suffering. The same writer says again, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us." If the plan of God is taken as a whole and this life is serving the needs of the remainder of life, then any present experience which enriches character for the future may easily be within the fatherly love of God.

But all this is merely a statement of the uses that may be made of sorrow and pain. It is no effort to explain their origin apart from the presence in the world of moral evil which would carry full explanation of its own results. The Christian believer does not claim to understand or interpret God beyond human limits. The suggestions

are given as showing why the presence of pain and suffering and sorrow does not dampen the assurance of the Christian that God is supremely and unfailingly loving. Indeed, instead of interpreting God's love in the presence of his suffering, the Christian interprets the suffering in the light of God's love. Pain and loss and suffering are easier to bear when there is a loving God who can bring good out of them or can serve some large and good ends through them. Humanity is hopeless in presence of such conditions if there is no such God and it is left to bear as best it may or escape if it can.

In the Christian Faith this love of God is not merely general good will to his universe. It includes also a care for the individuals who make up the human race, for the last and poorest of them and for the best and finest as well. All human distinctions are incalculable in presence of such a being as the infinite God. When two men stand side by side, we may notice that one is two or three inches taller than the other, but when they are standing before a great mountain, the few inches make no difference. The differences among men, whereby some are rich and some are poor, some are prominent and some are obscure, some are learned and some are ignorant—these cannot seem very great when one thinks of God. Yet there are always some who think that God cannot care for small things because he is so great. Christ's striking word about this has already been quoted. God numbers the hairs of men's heads. He notes the movements of small birds. This is the meaning of his infinite wisdom and power. It has no limits such as must be set on our frail human abilities. One of Christ's parables was about a flock of sheep numbering one hundred. One sheep wandered, but the shepherd noted its absence and after enfolding the ninety and nine, he set out through the night and rain until he found the wanderer and brought

it home rejoicingly. So, Christ said, God does with human beings. No one of them is so obscure that he is not regarded.

A university teacher in America was much impressed with the vastness of the universe and told his class that anyone who supposed God could pay any special heed to his needs or his prayers showed that he had never looked through a telescope. He thought that a God who must direct and maintain so vast an order as the telescope reveals could not be expected to regard individual men. But why not? Do not individuals make up the great mass? Where would the vast universe be if its smallest parts did not exist? How could the great universe be maintained if its details were not maintained? And are we not measuring the infinite God by our own small power? If we had to control so vast a universe, certainly we would have no power left for smaller details, but that does not mean that God's infinite power would be taxed by a vast universe. In the West it appears that many men have expanded their ideas of the universe more rapidly than their idea of God. With a vastly enlarged universe and a God adequate for only a small universe, it is clear that thought of God's concern for all the individuals of the race seems difficult. In any clear understanding of the infinity of God, the dimensions of the universe and the multiplicity of its concerns are negligible considerations. God is as adequate for a vast universe as for a small one.

Christians find in this reality the ground for their prayers. A loving God, willing only good to his creatures, is not bound in his own universe so that he cannot or will not do what they need. To answer a right prayer or to grant a right petition, the universe need not be altered. It need only be controlled according to the principles of love. Prayer is not a plea for the changing

of God's order of the world. It is placing on his heart the needs of those who love him and who desire his gracious will to be done. It rests on his power and his love. He is able and he is willing to do what is best for his creatures. When persons are involved, the expression of such power and love is not mechanical; it may wait on the expression of desire in those who offer the petition. There are many things which a loving parent can give his child without his desire, but there are some things which cannot be given except as the child develops and expresses in some way the desire for them. Any father can give his child a new house or a new coat, whether the child wishes it or not, but what father can give a child an education if he does not desire it? What father can give a child a good temper or a good spirit if the child does not wish it? The only appeal he can make in such a case is one worthy of the free personality with which he is dealing. So there must be many things which a personal and loving God would eagerly do for his children when they wish them, which even he could not do for them apart from their desire, without violating their personalities. The world has a mechanism, but it is not a mechanism alone. It is the instrument of a loving God.

VI

This Christian idea of God as a holy, loving Father carries with it the inevitable assurance that he will be a self-revealing God. Such a God will desire to make himself known. The Christian Faith declares that he has revealed himself in three principal ways: in nature, in the experiences of men, and supremely in Jesus Christ.

(a) The Founder of the Christian religion made large use of nature to illustrate and assure the characteristics of God and his attitude toward men. Nor was he the first

to point out this continuous working of God in the natural order. There is an almost or quite instinctive inclination of even the most savage peoples to find evidences of God there. Though they mis-read his message they are not altogether missing it, for he does speak in the powers of nature. They read a message of wrath and danger when the voice they should hear is one of love and safety. But the wisest men do not miss some message there. One of the earliest Christian preachers once told a non-Christian audience that God had left a witness to himself in the fact of rains and fruitful seasons and the joys of harvest. A Christian astronomer said, "We think thy thoughts after thee, O God." A Christian botanist was found at work in his laboratory over his microscope, watching the unfolding of a flower. When he was asked what he was doing, he replied, "I am watching God at work." This is entirely in the Christian spirit. Such a God as the Christian believes in would seek to make himself known in every way suited to himself and to those who would learn of him. There would be no forcing of his presence on unwilling men; not even human persons at their best force themselves on each other. But God offers great truths about himself to men everywhere. Nature, as a poet has said, is a garment of God which reveals while concealing his form.

(b) The self-revelation of God occurs also in the experiences of men. Something of God's reality is in the very forming of mankind, as we shall see in the next lecture. All men are made in his image. But God is constantly revealing himself to the race of men through individual men who are his messengers. There is nothing strange or unusual in this method. It is the way in which all truth becomes known. Nothing is grasped by all the race at once. Instead, a few men learn a great truth, or possibly only one man learns it. He tells it to

another and another and thus it spreads to the world. One man discovers the fact of electricity, not all men at once. One man discovers the remedy for a disease, not all men. One man finds a principle of sound government, not all men. But as each man makes his discovery, he becomes a trustee for other men. It is God's way of making truth known. It is so in religion. The great realities of God come not to all at first, but to one or to a few. These who receive them are not more loved of God than are others, though at times they may think themselves so. They are made trustees by the goodness of God for the help of others. This fact appears in the history which prepared the way for the Christian Faith. The founder of Judaism was Abraham. In the story of his call to receive fuller knowledge of God he was told that he and his family would be blessed, but it was in order that they might become a blessing. This is the purpose of God always, so far as any record comes to us from the past. All men who know any truth about God are trustees of that truth, and they owe it to their fellows everywhere to make it known. This is God's gracious way of self-revelation, a way which unites the whole race of men around great truths. It is not the outcome of partiality. It is the way whereby racial unity can be developed and truth can become a common possession of all through the ministry of all. It is natural that the record of this revelation of God should be made available for men everywhere, and so the sacred books appear. Truth in any of them ought to be recognized and welcomed by men of all faiths. Christian adherents offer their sacred book with great confidence that men of all nations will find the truth of God there. It is a record of experiences wherein God has made himself known to men who became trustees of the knowledge thus received. They were normal men and their knowledge of God be-

comes available for all their fellows, not for the unusual and exceptional men alone. What God desired them to know of him is what he desires all men to know, and this is the usual way in which truth spreads through the world.

(c) But all these methods of self-revelation are surpassed for the Christian Faith by the revelation of himself which God makes in the person of Jesus Christ. The men who first knew and followed Christ were very deeply trained in the idea of one God. No men could have received with more abhorrence the suggestion of many gods. Nor did their conviction at this point change at any time. The Christian Faith asserts without diminution the unity of God. These early followers of Christ came, however, to a strange experience. It involved no theory for its own explanation. The theory or doctrine came much later, long after the original followers were gone, because the early experience persisted. In short, these followers of Christ found that they were compelled by their experience to take toward him the same attitude which they had learned to take toward God. His language about himself, revealing his marvelous self-consciousness, his self-assertion, which they found entirely supported by his achievements in their own lives and in the lives of others, his attitude toward their lives and his offering for the future, the result of his sacrificial death in their own peace of heart, his magnificent program for world mastery and salvation, indeed, the whole of their experience with Christ forced them to the conviction that in dealing with him they were dealing not merely with a man like themselves but with the very fact of God. They had no idea of this when they set out to follow him, nor had any of the early believers when they accepted him as their Savior. It was as they went on in their experience that the conclusion came to them of its own accord. This

Christ was very God! The idea could not be more surprising to any people of the earth than to them. They had a long-standing background of belief in a God who did not assume human form. They were not, and they never for an instant became, polytheists. But there came to them the unescapable conviction of the deity of their Master. One of the earliest opponents of the Christian Faith (and it has made its way from the very first in the midst of opposition) voiced his protest against the incarnation of God in Christ in terms which would have been wholly acceptable to the early disciples but for their unescapable experience. He denied the possibility of incarnation on three counts: it degrades God by subjecting him to change; it unduly exalts man by making him the object of God's special care; it has in view an unattainable end, the cure of moral evil. But all these natural objections become inoperative in the presence of Christian experience of God's revelation of himself in Christ. There is no longer an interest in a static God who is degraded by change, when that change is merely an added expression of infinite love. Indeed, all a priori objections to the incarnation fall before the fact of incarnation, and that fact has become indubitably sure to Christian believers.

One other item of experience added to the mystery of the truth. Before the Master's death, he spoke to the disciples of his purpose to maintain their spiritual lives and their contact with him through the gift of one whom he called the Holy Spirit, saying that in his coming, there would be a renewed and special presence of God. Here was new mystery, but it was not so much an intellectual puzzle as an enrichment of experience. In all that they were gaining of the knowledge of God they were losing nothing which they had known before. God was all he had been to their fathers and to their own earlier

days, but here were new depths in his personality which they had not guessed. At first, they did what any earnest people would do—they simply accepted the experience and lived it joyously. They had no doctrine about it. Here was their glad experience with Christ; here was the fulfillment of his word about the coming of a distinctive power and presence of God which they could not mistake; yet there was still all their fine belief about God, unreduced and merely enriched. In the first joy of experience no one concerns himself about theories or doctrines. When a beautiful sunset occurs, the most beautiful of one's experience, following a gray and shadowed day, one stands at first merely to enjoy it, not greatly caring for a learned lecture on the optical and physical principles involved in it. Afterward there is time for the lecture, and in the calmer mood which it invokes there may come a deeper pleasure in the experience when it recurs. This was the course of the Christian Faith. The rich experiences of God in these three aspects continued and for a time were merely accepted. It was inevitable, however, that the meaning of them, the rationality of them, should be demanded by thoughtful minds. To be sure, it is only a certain type of mind that demands explanation, but Christianity has drawn to itself minds of all types. The distinctively philosophical type appeared early in the history, and then this apparently conflictive group of experiences was analyzed. The result was the forming of a doctrine, as a rationalizing of the experiences, which is now known as that of the Trinity of God. It asserts his true unity. There are not three Gods; there is but one God. Yet within his unity is a rich personality which is manifested in the threefold distinctions, which are called in Christian speech, the Father, the Son and the Spirit. There has been much philosophical discussion regarding the eternal reality here

revealed, but the Christian Faith is committed to no philosophy of it. If the great fact is true, that the one God exists in a threefold distinction, then the Christian experience becomes rationalized. But the doctrine is not and has never been the main fact for the Christian Faith. The main fact has always been the rich experience of God which first suggested the doctrine. It was because believers found God in Christ, became sure of God as a present fact in the Holy Spirit without losing at any point their assurance of the infinite Father to whom both Christ and the Holy Spirit bore witness, that the doctrine came into being. Its refinements and philosophical niceties since that time have not always helped the Faith, but it is not the doctrine which the Faith offers to the non-Christian world. It offers, instead, the great experiences of God which gave it birth. Any man who follows Jesus Christ faithfully has caught the genius of the Christian Faith. In its fullness he will also find the experiences which make the idea of the Triune God reasonable and joyously acceptable. For that idea brings assurance of the complete supply of every need of the human heart for God. The heart needs a God vastly beyond itself, holding the universe and all its destinies in his mighty hands—and God is the Father. The heart needs a God who meets it on its own level, sharing its experiences, knowing its struggles, and bringing help for victory—and God is the Son. The heart needs a God who stands in closest relation to it, entering its very life, showing himself part of its daily experiences—and God is the Holy Spirit. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is not chiefly intellectual, and it does not first justify itself to the intellect. It is chiefly experiential, justifying itself to the heart of a believer. Afterward, inevitably, it brings satisfaction also to the intellect, since the heart

cannot long hold what the intellect rejects, just as the intellect cannot long hold what the heart rejects.

VII

The Christian conviction regarding God finds its fullest expression when it uses the word Father to describe him. The word means much more than creator or even preserver. It involves love and fellowship such as any good earthly father desires and maintains with his children. He is to be loved and worshiped, but none the less, obeyed. The Christian stands in holy awe of God, seeking to know his will, assured that in his will is man's peace. He is committed by his faith to obedience to God's will, but it is a joyous obedience to One who deserves all honor and love. No greater service can be rendered by one to another than to call him to the love and service of such a God as he whom Christ taught men to call Father. It is to that love and service that the Christian Faith would call the whole world. It issues the call in full appreciation of all other ideas of God in the world, believing that in this conception of a holy, loving Father is the fulfillment of the hopes and desires of all earnest seekers after God. Here, it believes, is the goal of that passionate quest for God which has ennobled and beautified the history of humanity.

Chapter V

THE CHRISTIAN CONVICTION REGARDING MAN

It will be recalled that four major interests determine the value of any religion for thoughtful men; namely, its teaching about God, about man, about the relation between God and man and about the relation between man and man. Our discussion at this time brings us to the second of these determining subjects. What does the Christian religion teach about man?

It would seem that opinions about man would be easiest to form and most certain of universal acceptance. Surely men know themselves, whatever else is hid from them. But that is far from being the case. Few subjects attract more debate and result in wider divergence than this very matter. A Christian poet said long ago that the proper study of mankind is man. He might have added that it is also the most difficult study of mankind. The fact is that we know more definitely to-day about the movements of the planets in the heavens than about the working of the heart and mind of man. We know more about the laws that emerge in the relations of the stars than we do about the controlling influences in human society. The two most chaotic departments of science in the West are those of psychology and sociology, the sciences in which man himself is most intimately involved. There remain many students who question if either of these departments can properly be called a science, and

many of those who reckon them scientific are more eager to be scientific in their treatment than to be entirely true to all the facts involved, since those facts are exceedingly baffling.

If any man feels that there are no more mysteries to be cleared and no more problems to be solved let him turn upon himself and seek the springs of his own conduct, the grounds of his feelings, the processes of his intellect, comparing them with the same conditions among his fellows, and he will find that he is far from final knowledge of the mystery that lies nearest to him. Only men who have not thought seriously about it can count the heart of man an open book. It is sometimes said that the West cannot understand the East nor the East the West, and there are some who add that never the twain can meet. This would mean that world unity is impossible. But, for that matter, the same thing is frequently said in narrower fields. We are told that the English and the Irish can never understand each other, and that the Londoner and the man from the provinces think so differently that they cannot hope to agree. Chinese are said not to be able to fathom the Japanese mind, and no one is considered able to fathom the Chinese mind. In an English paper recently it was said that only a Sikh can understand a Sikh. All this runs back to a far more radical fact—that no man understands himself. The Scotch poet wished for some one who would give us power to see ourselves as others see us. That would doubtless be a help. But a greater help would be to see ourselves as we really are. The Greeks advised that the study begin there, when they put over the door of a temple: "Know thyself." The most difficult man to know accurately is one's self. The Christian Scripture speaks in one place of the heart, the inner reality, as being deceitful above all things. It merely calls attention to

what any man knows if he has tried to examine himself, for there are subterfuges of explanation and evasions of finality which make the way exceedingly difficult. If a man knew himself as he is, then he might more safely trust himself to know other men as they are. One evidence of the uniqueness of Christ mentioned in the story of his life is that he knew what was in man and needed not that any man should tell him. Certainly that is far more than the rest of us can say. The past century has been largely devoted to the scientific study of the external world, the macrocosm. This century bids fair to be largely devoted to the study of the internal world, the microcosm. Some day we shall know more of man. But already we know enough for racial and world unity, if we care to use our knowledge. Pending deeper knowledge some obvious facts can be mentioned, facts of which Christian adherents are convinced.

As we noted in stating the Christian conviction regarding God, so here; there have been large volumes written to express in its fullness the Christian idea of man. Yet here also we venture to gather into one widely used phrase the heart of that idea: the Christian conviction is that *man is a creation and a child of God.* The phrase links him to God by two cords, and these cords are noted in two expressions in the Christian Scripture—that God made man "out of the dust of the ground," and that God made man "in His own image." Like the rest of creation man is created by God; unlike the rest of creation he is a child of God. He has much in common with the rest of the universe; in his most distinctive elements he is unique in the universe. It is further strikingly phrased in the Bible in the saying that when God made man of the dust of the ground He breathed into him the breath of life and so man became a living soul. Man comes both from dust and from deity, but always by the power and purpose

of God himself. Our discussion during this hour will be devoted to the fuller analysis of this statement and of its implications.

I

Questions of the origin and of the nature of man intertwine and can hardly be discussed separately, but the Christian Faith is more concerned with what man is than with the way he came to be so. In due course we must consider the origin of man in view of the results of the recent study of antiquity, but we begin our study with thought of man as he is to-day.

In the Christian belief man is animal and spiritual at the same time. 1. He is part and parcel of nature. He has much in common with the brutes, both in the lower and higher orders. He is subject to the forces of nature at many points. He falls before its storms like a tree, he feels its cold, he suffers from its heat, he requires its food and drink, he is born as other animals are born and he dies as they die. It may be if one could come from another planet with no power to appreciate higher attainments, man would seem weaker than many of the brutes. He is small beside the elephant, slow beside the horse, clumsy beside the tiger, groveling beside the eagle, gross beside the insect, feeble beside the lion. Yet he masters and directs them all! One of the poets who preceded the Christian Faith once exclaimed, "When I consider God's heavens, the work of his fingers, the moon and the stars which he has ordained, what is man that God is mindful of him or the son of man that God visits him?" Modern knowledge of the universe adds to the wonder of the distinction. Man is an insignificant figure in the vast universe. Yet he is part and parcel of it. It is not as though he were a foreign substance introduced into nature and the natural order. On his physical and

purely animal side he is exactly where he belongs. The Christian Faith would not want to deny this connection. Instead, it asserts that the earth is the work and possession of God and that man as a creation of God should count himself part of the earth and find no disgrace in that fact. In the effort to state the dignity of man, the loathsome or ignoble phases of animal or inanimate life are sometimes accented. But in the Christian view all these are parts of an order which is under the guiding hand of God, and such phases are objectionable only to man, not in themselves. There is no shame in the intimate relation of man as one part of God's order with any other part of that order. It is only when man loses his distinctness from the rest of the order that shame arises.

2. For, if man is the product of the physical order and if he is still intimately connected with it, he has also become or has been made vastly superior to the main order. He is more than animal, more than physical. An American student in this field, speaking not for Christian argument but purely as an historian, remarks that "no fact in nature is fraught with deeper meaning than this two-sided fact of the extreme physical similarity and enormous psychical divergence between man and the group of animals to which he traces his pedigree." Another eminent scholar in this field has noted that while any study of "comparative psychology" of animals and man is sure to bring out striking similarities, it brings to light more clearly still the wide differences between the two groups of beings. This is the meaning of the Christian phrase which indicates that man is made "in the image of God." It does not imply that he is himself deity nor that he is ever to be elevated to the level of deity. Always he will be finite as he is now, not absorbed into deity nor lost in the totality of life nor swallowed up in the depths of infinity. But man is in the image of God

in special sense. His nature is formed after the likeness of God's nature. His powers are, within his finite range, like the powers of God in the infinite range. Man's personality is his unique distinction. However nearly animals approach this high estate, they do not attain to it. In the fullness of his personality man stands above all animals. The Christian Faith asserts this of all men, savage or civilized. There is a far wider chasm between the lowest human being and the highest animal than between the lowest and highest human beings. Among human beings the difference is in degree; between animals and men the difference is in kind. The unfailing test is the development that proves possible for the lowest man and the highest animal. Men can be brutal, more selfish, more cruel than animals. They can be degraded, coarse, savage, so low in the scale that other men would prefer to live with animals, so inhuman that other men despair of their possibilities. Yet if these men at their lowest and these animals at their highest are taken under kindly and intelligent tutelage and their inherent powers brought into fullest play, no one can question what the outcome will be. The next generation, under such guidance, will reveal the wide divergence in the natures of the two groups, and presently the human species will be what the animals never can become. This difference is not injected into the situation; it is merely revealed in the situation. It was there all the time. And the fundamental difference is that in man at his lowest there is personality, while in brutes at their highest there is not personality. Just now we are not discussing how man becomes a person; we are emphasizing the fact that he is a person. In this fact, however attained, he shows himself to be in the image of God.

(*a*) One result is that he cannot be fully satisfied with the things which the earth offers. He needs and

should use them. Christianity is not an ascetic faith, though it persistently demands the control of all animal passions and desires. It warns men against living in and for the world alone, but it reminds them that the world is God's gift and urges the right use of it and its pleasures. Man is always to be the master of his desires, never their slave. A philosopher of Christendom has declared that, apart from religion, the end of man is to secure an abundance of the good things of this world, with life, health and peace to enjoy them. This would never satisfy the Christian idea of man's chief end. The Christian Faith does not despise the good things of life, though it has had its monks and ascetics. It merely persists in its declaration of the higher levels of human interests. As a later Christian student has pointed out, it is certain that in the natural order of events the world and all that is in it will be destroyed and cease to exist in its present form. The human race will go the way of all the earth. All the material things it has made or accomplished will pass away. But the Christian Faith does not admit that what has been most distinctive in humanity shall pass away. Character, personality, rationality, are not destructible but permanent. They become a permanent contribution to the universe. Christ once pointed out that if men live for purely physical things they are no better than the brutes, and they bring their lives down to brute level, whereas they are meant to move on a higher plane. The world is for man to use, because he belongs to it, but it is meant for him to direct, because he is above it.

(*b*) For the same reason, man is not the slave of the forces of the physical world. He must submit to their order in many ways, and he finds limits set on what he can do in the natural realm. But he is steadily learning to become master of the forces of nature, directing them to ends which are not of their own choosing. He is of

nature and above it. Many philosophers find it difficult to adjust this fact to their view of the world. They think of the universe as a closed system with no room in it for freedom or purely rational action. One teacher has recently said that free will is a mere matter of words, representing no reality. He adds that the term ought not to be used. But it is utterly impossible to be consistent with this view. For example, no such counsel as his own should be given if there is no freedom. Why tell us that we ought not to use a word if we are not able and free to cease to do so? We would not tell any man to do or cease to do anything which he had no liberty to change. All arguments against freedom of the will imply that it exists. There are mistaken claims for it, undoubtedly, but the reality seems assured. Man is not a mere puppet in the hands of a series of physical forces. He has something in his make-up which is best described as freedom. He can choose as nothing else in nature seems able to do. The Christian Faith declares this in all its insistence on the call of God to man. Man can obey the call, or it is utterly useless to issue it.

The freedom of man in nature is not, and never seems to be, absolute. It is always within limits. Man cannot go to the moon, but he has learned to fly through the air. He cannot live in heat or cold beyond a certain degree, but he has learned to extend both degrees and to make himself comfortable in heat or cold, not by instinctive adaptation as in the case of some brutes, but by rational activity and by direction of forces from their usual course into channels of his own desire. Man cannot do without food, but he has made for himself kinds of food which he desires, and has increased or diminished the supplies of nature, not merely discovering what he wishes as animals do and accepting the quantities which nature provides,

but asserting his own reason, adapting plants, developing new species, planting crops, clearing away growths of nature, and showing himself vastly superior to other animals. Man cannot do without shelter; he is even more dependent upon it than most animals, but he makes for himself shelter which animals never would devise, he ornaments shelter until it becomes beautiful, satisfying his asthetic sense, he constructs vast dwellings far beyond his actual wants, as animals never do. He turns the need of shelter into desire for fellowship and comfort. In order to do this he utilizes materials in nature which seemed at first impossible, he constructs new combinations of material which do not exist in the usual order of nature, he overcomes the limitations of nature by using forces of nature which had never before been used. At all points man shows himself masterful in nature, not its servant. Yet he is constantly being reminded that he moves within the limits set in the order of nature. There is truth in an old saying of Francis Bacon that "nature is not conquered except by obedience." But there is more than this. At certain points man can redirect nature. There is no reason to think that a Cologne cathedral or a Taj Mahal or a Buddhist monastery or a modern university lay in the path of natural progress. For their appearance there was an acceptance of the law of progress and of the material supplied by nature, but then there came a redirecting of the forces of nature. It is as when a subdued race accepts its position and then quietly sets to work to become the masters of those who have subdued it. This has occurred in history; it occurs constantly in man's relation to nature. Some things man cannot do, irrational or anti-natural things, but within the limits set for him he has large and forceful freedom. He is not the slave of the natural order.

II

The plainest mark of this superiority over physical nature is in the fact that man is rational. When he reaches his development he proves to be a thinking, planning, executing being. He is made in God's image in this sense, for God is rational. A famous saying among Christian writers is that of Blaise Pascal: "Man is but a reed and the weakest in nature but he is a reed that thinks. It does not need the universe to crush him; a breath of air, a drop of water will kill him. But even if the material universe overwhelm him, man would be more noble than that which destroys him, because he knows that he dies, while the universe knows nothing of the advantage it obtains over him." Whenever a human being refuses to act on the impulses of reason he forfeits in some degree his eminence in the order of life. Blind passions, brutal appetites, gross animalities, are always unworthy of true humanity, for they are a sacrifice of man's most distinctive trait of rationality. Herein lies man's marvelous power to forecast and to direct the future events of his life. What animals often do by instinct, man does by reason; but his reason goes much farther. The Christian Faith magnifies this power by demanding from its adherents the use of their rational power at their best. As a religion it is simple enough for the youngest child to accept, but it is also profound enough to tax the powers of the greatest intellect. Sometimes complaint is made that Christianity contains difficult truths. That is part of its glory. For it purposes to meet the needs of the highest as well as the lowliest. If man is at his best when he reasons, then religion must be able to challenge him at that point and propose to him questions which are still unanswered and problems still unsolved. It is always fatal for a religion when any man can think out beyond it. When a man

outgrows his gods, then they are gods no longer. An early Christian says is that a God understood would be God no longer. It is true. Some measure of understanding must mark all true belief in God, but a God whose entire reality is already grasped can no longer command the advancing spirit.

For the purposes of religion it is almost equally important to urge that man is moral. He is a being who measures conduct by the standards of right and wrong. It does not now concern us how he came to this position. Wise men differ widely about that. But certainly man as he is to-day has the power of knowing right and wrong, approving himself when he is right and condemning himself when he is wrong. Conscience is one of the best assured powers in the human nature. Man can sit in judgment on himself. He can sit in moral judgment also on social customs, changing the accepted moral codes, defying them, rising above them. Something within him often demands that he shall do so, and he shows himself to be unworthy if he does not yield to it. Christian writers often call conscience the voice of God in the human soul, and it deserves the name when it is rightly understood. It is often the voice of the God who made the world, declaring against abuse or neglect of duty. Morality is far more than a statement of what is true; it is a statement of what ought to be true, and a denial of the validity of something that is true and should not be. For this reason morality cannot be identified with knowledge or mere scientific progress. It is not certain whether a man is morally better or worse for knowing some things. It is possible to make sharper rascals by some forms of education. Good science often goes with bad morality. The discoveries of science may be magnificent instruments for morality, but they are no substitutes for morality. One might hear of two men, each of whom has picked the

lock of another man's safe. Each may do it in the same way and with the same scientific precision and skill. Yet we condemn one and praise the other, for one has picked the lock to rob the safe, and the other has picked it to secure valuable papers which the owner could not secure because of the loss of the combination. There is a scientific way of robbing a bank but there is no moral way of doing it. Science and morality may apply to the same act but they may not agree about it. A skilled operative may look at the evidence for a bank robbery and praise it as one of the most skillful he ever saw, noting the scientific knowledge involved; but an ethicist could not praise it, though he sees all the marks which attracted the other. The same observer may be both a scientist and an ethicist, approving and condemning the same act. Many illustrations make it clear that moral qualities are peculiar in themselves and not merely a phase of human activity and skill. One such illustration may be considered.

In an important American city the door of a bank's money vault became fastened and could not be opened. It was held by an intricate lock whose combination failed to work. Search was made for most expert locksmith, whose skill was a match for the intricacy of the lock and his sense of touch so delicate that he could know when the tumblers were falling into place. Such a man was found, admittedly one of the most expert men available for that task. But he was found in the penitentiary of the state, where he was imprisoned for opening the doors of other men's vaults. Permission was received for him to go to the city and exercise his skill on the difficult lock. He soon mastered it, and then was returned to the prison to continue his punishment for his earlier lack of good will. His skill did not insure morality. And this possible divorce between intellectual training and skill and the moral qualities explains why the Christian Faith is con-

cerned that education shall not be counted complete without the moral disciplines. Man is not rational alone; he is moral as well. He does not need science alone; he needs religion and ethics also.

A French writer has distinguished between science and religion at four points: 1. Science is without moral distinctions. For it a fact is a fact, whatever its moral quality, and it furnishes no ground for classifying some as right and some as wrong, or some as good and some as bad. 2. Science is without humaneness. It tends to reduce man's importance in the world, to make him more, not less, like the animal world around him. It does not dignify humanity; it tends instead to lower human value. 3. Science is without human destiny. The future it discovers for humanity is mere extinction. It says nothing of eternity. It fails to discover and honor the uniqueness of man as revealed in his impulses for eternity. 4. Science provides no human liberty. It makes free will an illusion and personal responsibility a mere phrase. On these four accounts he condemns science as a guide of life for humanity. In so far as science deserves the four characteristics, it deserves also the condemnation. Especially is it true that anything that reduces morality to mere practice or opinion helps to take away from man the highest of his religious distinctions.

But no one would repudiate this conception of science more earnestly than many scientific men themselves. They feel that such conclusions are not really those of science. The conclusion that man has no form of moral freedom and that he is merely one phase of a mechanistic universe does not come from careful observation and narration of facts, but from an a priori judgment based on observations in other fields. All human consciousness bears witness to moral liberty, human society always proceeds upon the supposition that such liberty exists, each man is com-

pelled to treat other men as though they had liberty, no man finds it possible to estimate his own conduct or experiences worthily, apart from such an opinion—all these and other similar facts are everywhere admitted. Then why are moral liberty and responsibility counted illusions? Solely because discoveries in other fields of thought and reality reveal a type of cause and effect and a succession of forces which preclude freedom, and it is assumed that this type must operate in the realm of personality. It is not shown that it does so operate; it is taken for granted that it must. And the effort is made not to explain the facts, but to show that they are not reliable. What they are is clear; what they must be on the mechanistic hypothesis is shown to be quite different. Of course this is not the method of science. It is not scientific to reduce all reality to a dead level, when certain phases of it reveal characteristics which differentiate it from other phases. A modern English scholar writes: "The remarkable advance in our knowledge of physics and biology seems to prove the soundness of our assumption that the mind of man is not merely a by-product of living matter but a new and higher type of reality which has come into being in recent stages of evolution." The validity of any sound religion or ethics is bound up in the existence in man's nature of something which is best described as moral freedom, a liberty which involves moral responsibility, the power to think and the power to be moral. That is, an endowment of rationality and morality is an indispensable prerequisite.

III

The Christian Faith gathers up the three main teachings already described—that man is spiritual (or more than physical), that he is rational, that he is moral—into the one great saying that he is inherently personal. That is the

deepest truth about him. Made in the image of the personal God, he is himself supremely personal. The preservation and due development of human personality is a supreme duty of society. Lack of reverence for human personality as such is the supreme social offense. The Christian Faith has always to be asserted at this point, and many of those who profess it have failed to obey it here. Two outstanding illustrations ought to be mentioned, and they will indicate clearly that the Christian Faith is providing correction for what are called Christian lands. They will enforce the saying that it is not Christendom but Christianity which is being offered to the world to-day. However, it is only fair to add that illustrations could be found in every land of the world. It is because Christendom is part of the human order, and not because it is Christendom, that they emerge there.

(a) The rights of human personality should be the standard of relationships in industry. The evil of machinery and of modern factory life is greatest in its ruthless disregard of the interests of the human beings who are involved. Christ once asked if a man is not better than a sheep. Surely we may ask if a man is not better than a machine. Christian believers are awakening to the fact that the laborer is more important than the labor he performs. If industry makes garments by destroying girlhood and womanhood, society is a loser in the bargain. Jesus said no man could gain enough to make up for the loss of his soul or his true personality. That is true of the social order. No society can ever grow rich enough nor comfortable enough to make up for ruining the lives of men and women and children in its mills and factories and other industries. The hours of human labor, the rewards of labor, the mode of living, opportunities of culture, of pleasure and rest, and all such interests are within the concern of the Christian Faith. That Faith passes

severe judgment on its own adherents who neglect this demand of personality. It has no defense for a system that neglects such vital interests. It does not propose that other nations copy this neglect in order to be Christian. Instead, it declares that in so far as its own adherents deserve this condemnation, they are not yet fully Christian. At the same time, it is proper to point out how widely the new spirit of regard for personality is dominating industry. Great experiments are under way in every Christian land to discover the best way of serving personality in the fields of industry. Such experiments mark many enterprises in lands where the Christian Faith is still new. They are of the very essence of the Christian teaching about man.

(b) The other illustration is in the matter of war. Sometimes the attack on war is based on its economic cost, or its physical waste, or even on its terrible toll of human life. These arguments have their value, but they are not apt to have weight when certain great interests are involved. There are greater things than economic progress or physical conservation, and all heroism declares that human life is not a final fact to be held dear above all else. The true and final attack on war must be at the point of its danger to human personality. At most points it simply disregards personality. It uses men like things. Often in the stress of war men are reckoned at lower valuation than things or animals. In its crises men are called to disregard the personalities who oppose them and to follow practices which tend to degrade their own personalities. In the aftermath of war always come bestial practices which reduce men to brutes. It cannot be necessary that human differences shall be dealt with in ways that lower the level of the mass of men who take part in them.

We are not to forget the noble characters in all lands

who have taken part nobly in wars. We are not to say that war under all conditions and for all purposes has been anti-Christian. But we are to say that war is a crude, barbaric way of dealing with conditions which could have been dealt with worthily at an earlier stage of their development, and that it is unchristian to allow conditions to develop which lead at last to the use of such a method. Surgery is proper under the right conditions, but no mother would be justified in neglecting an ailment of her child until it required the amputation of a limb or the removal of an eye. War can be justified, if at all, only as a shamefaced acceptance of the consequences of one's neglect of evils which have now become insupportable. It is not too much to say that if another war occurs similiar to the recent one in Europe, Christian adherents must accept heavy blame, not for their Faith but for their own neglect of their Faith. The accent of the Christian Faith on the value of human personality makes war a ruinous and wasteful method of dealing with human differences. It was not until this phase of its cost became clear to Christian believers that they took any wide stand regarding it. That stand is being made today, not by meek-eyed pacifists, but by multitudes of virile men who realize that wars grow out of emergencies which ought not to be allowed to arise. So long as the Christian Faith declares for the value of human personality because of its likeness to divine personality, war must be opposed as a principle of national life.

As to the nature of man, then, the Christian Faith holds that he is a creature and also a child of God, part of nature yet above nature, a rational being, a moral being —in short, a person, made in the image of God. It holds that this is true of every man wherever he is and whatever his stage of development.

IV

1. The Christian teaching regarding the origin of man must not be confused with the scientific discussion of the method of his origin. When it is asserted that God created man, nothing is determined about the way in which he did so. Opinion in Christendom regarding it is divided. Some adherents believe the creation to have been immediate, a distinct act of God, setting man apart from the rest of creation. Other adherents accept the widely held evolutionary view of man's origin, insisting equally on the fact that it was God's way of making man. The two chief difficulties in the evolutionary theory felt by many Christian adherents have been briefly mentioned in an earlier lecture. (a) One is that some of its teachers allow the mere process to take the place of any power or mind controlling and directing the process. This eliminates God and his wisdom and power. When a Christian finds a teacher of evolution speaking as though there were no intelligence in the universe, as though the whole process were blind and casual, he finds one of his deepest assurances challenged. A universe cannot make itself casually or blindly, and then reveal, as this one does, so many marks of rationality and purpose. If the theory of evolution is held in full light of a personal God who originates, maintains and directs the process, then one of the principal difficulties before the Christian is removed. (b) The other serious difficulty with the theory in some of its forms is that it degrades man from his high estate. A pre-Christian poet spoke of man as but little lower than the angels. It has been pointed out this theory, instead, may make him but little higher than the brutes. We have already argued that it would be a mistake to speak as though man had no animal connection, but it is as great a mistake to speak as though man had

nothing but animal connection. If he is a creature, he is also a child, of God. Some enthusiasts for the theory of evolution see man so bound with chains to the past that he has no more freedom than the brutes through whose processes he is declared to have come. They rob him of immortality and moral uniqueness. They make him no longer a child of the infinite personal God. In this form the Christian cannot believe in it. However, if the theory is held in view of the fact that man is what he is, no matter how he became so, if the facts are held to be true whether they fit the theory or not, if the facts are always more than the theory—then another serious difficulty is removed for the Christian adherent.

(c) It has been felt also that the whole theory of evolution conflicts with the teachings of the Bible, but this objection does not seem to most Christian thinkers a valid one, both because the Bible does not attempt to state the method but only the fact of God's creation, and also because a clear understanding of the Bible seems to them quite as compatible with the evolutionary method as with any other. At any rate, it is to be remembered always that the evolutionary view is held as a working theory, the best obtainable for explaining the largest number of facts now known in nature. It was formed on a scientific and not a religious basis, and it will doubtless be altered on the same basis as new facts emerge or as modifications of the theory are required for better explanation of facts. There are forms in which it is held by the most earnest and devout believers in the Christian Faith. It is enough for them that by this method or by any other God has produced man, a being such as we have described, worthy to be called a being made in the image of God.

2. In accordance with this view of man's origin, the Christian Faith asserts the unity of the human race. It

is wholly unimportant whether the human race has several geographical origins, though there is a tendency in anthropology to declare for single origination. If there were several, of which the one in the Bible is to be considered merely typical, the race would still be one, because it originates in the creative act of God and is all in his image. Wherever man appears as man, the Christian Faith declares him brother to all other men. In one of the earliest incidents recorded in the Christian Scripture, a man asks contemptuously, "Am I my brother's keeper?" No answer is suggested in the story and many have taken an affirmative reply for granted. The tone of the Scripture teaching suggests a negative reply. A man is not his brother's keeper; instead, he is his brother's brother, and that is very different. A keeper looks down on the one whom he keeps; he tries to regulate the other's conduct according to his own will as a keeper; he settles the other's condition for him as a keeper of sheep settles their conditions. There has been quite enough of the "keeper" spirit among nations, the stronger "keeping" the weaker and developing a dominating and directive spirit which brings little good. The Christian Faith does not teach the "keeperhood" of men, but their brotherhood. Its adherents have not been true to this conviction, but it has been a constant challenge and corrective for the wrongs of the society which Christians have formed. There is no room in the Christian theory for anything like the caste system. It has often had classes of people, but even so it has not separated those classes by fixed lines. Always it has provided for the passing of men from one class to another. It has not believed those classes to be ordained of God in such sense that they could not change without violating his will. No man is born to a class so that he cannot leave it if he will. In Christendom there is a constant movement from class to class, sometimes by way

of industry, sometimes by education, sometimes by marriage, and in many other like ways. Classes are not fixed and final; they are mobile and changeable. It is sometimes said that social classes are merely the first stages of a fixed caste system; some assert that this is the actual way in which caste did originate. This may be true, though the history is obscure. But it is to be noted that when class distinctions do show signs of hardening into compulsory differences, the Christian Faith enters protest against them. It cannot put its sanction on them. And the most dangerous element in caste must always be a religious sanction. This makes the distinction between men hard and fast, linking it to the moral order which is the will of God. When Christian adherents have asserted this, they have been challenged by their own Faith. Fixed classes are not consonant with the Christian Faith.

It is interesting and cheering to have the word of a notably wise Indian that it is open to question whether caste is an integral part of the prevailing faith of India, and that the Indian community is gathering its forces for the great effort to reform its social order. This will be an heroic task and its severest test will be its dealing with a fixed caste system. For all that, no defense can be made for some of the class distinctions that occur in Christendom. All we are now saying is that they are no part nor element in the Christian Faith. Essential human equality, not in gifts and abilities, not in character nor in achievements, but in rights and opportunities for personality—this is the normal Christian teaching.

(a) In the past this teaching has been contradicted by slavery, the involuntary bondage of one man to another. Slavery was so much the social practice of the period before and during the beginnings of Christianity, it was so quietly accepted, that at first the entire thought seems to have been to alleviate its evils, maintaining its

reality as a matter of course. As the centuries went on, however, it became clear that the principle of human brotherhood, the unity of the race, made such bondage impossible. Gradually it was eliminated from Christian society. Some of its evil influences still remain but they are a testimonial against the indifference with which Christian adherents have applied the Faith which they profess. The Christian Faith will never be content until slavery in all its forms and implications is driven from the human race. In a right human order no man bends an unwilling knee to the power of another man. True leadership, true governing, is voluntary. Its right is recognized by those who are led or governed, not as lying in power, but as lying in service and ability and willingness to serve the general good. That is not slavery; it is merely a form of fellowship. That is what the Christian Faith started men to feeling very early in its career, as is shown by the letter of one of its early leaders, Paul, to a master who was instructed to welcome a returning slave as a brother.

(b) The Christian conviction of the unity of the race is contradicted again by the racial feeling which causes such unrest in the world. It is a heritage from a poorer past. Color lines and racial distinctions have their historical explanation, and this justifies them in the minds of some observers. Most students consider racial feeling to be among man's deepest sentiments, however it came to exist. Even though that might prove to be true, it has no place in the Christian scheme as a permanent barrier between human beings. There may be wholly legitimate reasons for one nation to look up to another nation. It may have achieved more, it may have a better system of government, it may be more enlightened, it may be stronger in number or character or ability. It harms no nation to look up to another as better than itself. The same thing is true of racial groups. They may be all the

better for having their eyes turned upward to racial groups which are farther up the slope of human progress. The Greek word for man probably means a being who looks up, and a true man is never afraid of looking up to one who is better than himself. But that is far from what is meant by racial antipathy. This is not based on merit but on differences which do not run deep except for purposes of argument. Races do differ, but they are all part of the one human race, and their agreements are far deeper and more important than their differences. The differences between men cut down *into*, but they do not cut down *through*, the human race. The racial antipathies that so mar human relationships to-day magnify human differences. The Christian Faith magnifies human likenesses. Many Christian adherents miss this application of its teaching, counting it a mere counsel of perfection, an ideal unattainable by ordinary humanity; but these do not determine the Faith itself.

Herein lies one of the most difficult problems of the world to-day. Until recent years races could live at peace in isolation from each other. Racial differences did not develop into racial antipathies. Almost every nation took it for granted that it was the most advanced nation in the world; it assumed as a matter of course that other nations were mere barbarians and doubtless envious of its own superiority. One reason for isolation in earlier days was the desire of each nation to protect its culture from the coarseness of other nations. But recent decades have thrown the whole human group into such close relations that such opinions have become serious. It does not much matter how a man acts when no one else is near, but if he claims great superiority and peculiar rights in the presence of other men, the case is different. Somewhere we must find a way of living together as fellow beings, our racial differences being recognized at their true worth but not

magnified into oppositions. Christian believers, for all of their failure to be faithful to it, yet offer their Faith as the solution of this problem. It is a Faith of a unified race, all brothers under the one Father God, all members of one race, all needing the same salvation, all capable of finding a true fellowship in Jesus Christ.

The Founder of the Christian Faith set for all men an example of this brotherhood. He came into a social condition where marked limitations were set on such customs as eating and drinking and physical contact with other men. He himself quietly and constantly overlooked these limitations. He chose his first group of followers from all classes of men, the despised and the favored. He went into the homes of all classes, eating with them even when people of other classes looked on him with great disfavor for doing so. Then, as in many parts of the world now, eating was accepted as sign of social equality; he frankly accepted its meaning and ate with all men. He touched lepers and other diseased men, helping them in spite of a social regulation against doing so. He was accused of being friendly to the lowest classes, and the charge was a valid one, but it did not prevent his being friendly also with the highest classes. There were marked racial animosities in his day which excluded several racial groups from the favor of the prevailing society of his race. He paid no heed to these animosities, making friends with members of these despised races and giving them of his best teaching and service quite as freely as to others. Moreover, he made it clear that this is the way of the Father of whom he was teaching the world. An incident is recorded of his speaking to a large group of those who despised other racial groups when he reminded his hearers of times in history when the choice of God had included people who were looked down upon by others, and so pointed did the reference seem that the hearers became a

murderous mob and tried to kill him. They recognized in him a spirit of democracy which would be revolutionary, as indeed it is, even in this later day. The race is one, brothers in the midst of differences. There is no secure peace for the world apart from this assurance.

V

All this conviction about man seems to leave out of account the shadow that rests on humanity wherever it is seen—the shadow of moral evil, of which something was said in the former lecture and which must be the background of the next lecture. The Christian Faith frankly faces this added element in any full conception of man. His present moral state is not what it should be. All religions have something to say about the fact in the moral nature which Christian teaching calls sin, but Christianity is peculiarly a religion of salvation and this disturbance of the moral life must challenge its attention in a special way. There are men who in their conduct and character make it seem almost an irony to speak of man as a child of God. Indeed, so far are some men from deserving this description, that the Founder of the Christian Faith once said to a group of men whom he was addressing that they were rather children of the evil one than of God! The men were not vile and coarse, not such men as would ordinarily be singled out for illustration of great evil in most lands, but men of a wrong and hateful spirit, farthest from the spirit of love which belongs to God. In Christian thought here is a difference between ignorance and sin, between mere weakness and sin, between defects and sin, between errors and sin, between remainders of the process of development and sin. All those other facts are negative; sin is positive. It is being and doing what one ought not to be and do, and what one need not be and do in order to be one's true self.

Many Christian thinkers define sin as *self-assertion in disregard of God*. It is refusing the true relations of one's own personality, neglecting its highest reaches, defaulting in its highest obligations, choosing a lower than the best. Though the forms of its expression vary widely, such a condition proves to be universal, involving the whole race and all its members. For that reason, and because he is a Father, sin has become the concern of God himself. The Christian Faith professes to bring his offer and way of escape from the fact of sin. It may be there would have been need for religion in a world without sin, but it is certain that it is the fact of sin that has determined the form of the Christian religion. Its primary offer is to men as sinners, and it offers itself to all men because it finds men everywhere suffering as its own adherents suffer, from the same spiritual disease and weakness. The form of it varies, but the root fact remains the same. It hinders the beautiful relation that might exist and ought to exist between man and God, and between man and man. It spoils the highest efforts of men, and hinders growth; it ruins men of every degree. No religion emphasizes more earnestly the fact and the peril of sin than does Christianity. We shall have much to say about it presently, but before it is left here, something should still be said about the meaning of the word quoted from the Founder of the Christian Faith which speaks of some men as being rather children of the devil than of God. He does not mean that the devil made these men—only God did that; nor that the devil cares for these men—only God does that; nor that the devil loves them or wishes them well or serves their needs—only God does that. All the way through it is God who is their Father, yet they are accepting a fatherhood from an enemy of God and of themselves.

An instance from a Western village will make his meaning clear. In the village there lived a good father

to whom came a son. The father gave him love and care and protection and sought to win and hold his love. But there was in the village also a foul-minded, evil-willed man who drew the attention of the son and commanded his approbation and following. Wherever the desires of the father and of the evil man came into conflict, the son yielded to the worse desires. When the plans and purposes of the two differed, the son chose the evil course. The evil man became his source of inspiration and guidance. Meanwhile, it was the father who continued to provide for him, who loved him, who sought his good—not the evil man. But presently the people of the village said, "The boy is really in spirit the son of the evil man, not of his father." By his own choice he had drawn on a different and ignoble source of spiritual life. And this is the meaning of the saying of Christ. The men to whom he was talking were governing their lives according to desires and principles that were never born in the life of God but came instead from the moral enemy of God and men. They were moved by hate and a spirit of opposition to truth, and possessed none of the traits of love and fairness that keep the heart open to truth. By their own choice they had chosen an unworthy idea of God's fatherhood for adoption. But meanwhile, God on his part was doing for them all that a true Father could do. Sin had broken their peaceful relation with God, but it had not defeated the love of God. The very presence and message of Christ were proof of that continuing love.

VI

For this very reason the Christian Faith makes much of the unmeasured possibilities of mankind. It is a faith of great belief in man, in his inherent powers, in his possibilities of advancement, in the value of his escape from the limiting and hindering fact of sin. (a) Christianity

utterly denies fatalism. There is a sovereign Power controlling the world, but that Power is far from a hard and fast Fate which cannot be escaped. It is the control of a rational being over rational beings, preserving that measure of human freedom which is necessary for true humanity. Man is not caught in the grip of merciless forces, in the wheels of a mechanism in which he is powerless. He is a rational being in a rational universe. He is a moral being in the world of a moral God. So he need not remain evil and sinful, he need not be selfish and self-assertive in disregard of the rights of God and man. There are men who consider human nature a fixed and final fact, unalterable and changeless. When once they have shown that a certain evil has a long standing in history and appears wherever man appears, they think the case is closed and that there need be no discussion of change. The Christian Faith does not admit that any evil in the human life or relationship is essential, no matter how long-standing it may be. It can point to numberless instances of change from evil to good, from selfishness to unselfishness, from arrogance to true humility, and what can be done in individual cases it declares possible in the large areas of humanity. Christianity believes in men everywhere. If they are savage, it believes they can be civilized, not through long processes of difficult development, but through new spiritual forces that can be released through the power of Christ. If they are sinful, it believes they can be made right, not through mere heroic effort, but through the new life that can be received through Christ. If they are angry and divided, it believes they can be brought into peaceful brotherhood in Christ. The Christian Faith despairs of no man nor race of men.

(b) Another great assurance about men is that they may have fellowship with the great God of the universe. This is not gained by lowering the idea of God. It is

gained, instead, by accenting the spiritual relationship between God and man. This is the heart of its joy in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. The fellowship which man has with God is not by the upreaching of men, but by the downward stooping of God. When a man and a child are walking together, the child cannot hope to take the long step of the man, but if the man will slow down his walk to the step of the child, then they can go forward happily. This is what God has done in Christ. He has made men realize his love and friendship, his readiness to catch their step and walk at their speed until they can make his acquaintance. This is not an experience which waits for some other existence; it is a human privilege and experience here and now. It is what Christians mean by loving God, not an ecstatic experience reserved for a few gifted souls, but open to ordinary men and women in the midst of their grinding toil or in their hours of quiet and rest.

(c) The Christian Faith asserts also the inherent immortality of men. Its adherents have not always agreed about it, but the main current is unmistakable. Man, because he is in the image of God, is immortal. Something about him dies, of course, but that which is his realest, deepest self, does not die. To it death is not an end, but an incident in its course. Personality belongs inherently to this immortal element in his make-up, and it is never lost once it comes into being. The Christian Faith cannot assert nor agree to the renewed appearance of the individual man on earth in different forms. The human self-conscious personality is too rare and vital a reality to be abandoned as personal, or to reappear in another form totally unconscious or, in rare flashes even dimly conscious, of its earlier existence. Personality is self-conscious and persistent. However divided and distracted it may become, yet after the storm it abides in full realization

of itself. That is its normal status, to which it returns as a pendulum swings at last to its central point.

And this applies to every man. Men do not earn immortality by efforts of their own. It belongs to them by inherent worth. The incident which we call death does not deal with this deathless reality which we call personality. One of the largest joys of the Christian Faith is in the resurrection of Christ, his living again after his death. An early preacher of the Faith once told a large group of hearers that it was not possible that such an one as Christ should be held by such a thing as death. Death is a merely physical force, so far as its operations can be traced. It seemed to him logically impossible for personality to be overruled by a physical force. This is one of the great reasons for the interest of Christianity in all men everywhere. They are not creatures of a day, to disappear and cease to be to-morrow. They are beings in the image of the infinite and eternal God, with a far-reaching destiny, whose direction they are determining in this life. Each of them is worthy of effort and love, and to each of them the Christian Faith offers itself for the short span of earthly life and for the long reach of eternity.

VI

The Christian religion is clear in its conviction that Jesus Christ is the standard man. He is not an abnormal man, but a truly normal one. He is, in his place, what every man ought to be, in his own place. We have already said that it need not surprise us that God has come in human form when we believe that man himself is made in the image of God. He is not an impossible ideal; instead, he is a constant challenge to the meekest and proudest of humanity to become like him. It seems far ahead to propose human likeness to one who lived such a life and maintained such a character as his but it has been the am-

bition of Christian believers from the very beginning. Christ called his first disciples to follow him, and they understood it to mean very much more than mere physical following where he led. They found in him an example of life which they could imitate, and a character which they could form in their own lives. An early writer in the Christian Scripture said that one of the large purposes of God in forming the church of Christian believers was that thus the body of Christ could be built up, until, as he said, disciples of Christ attained unto full grown manhood, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Something of the hindrance of sin and selfishness is always to be overcome in the best of men, but the great possibility is held before all men that they may take Christ as their standard of life and character and expect in time or in eternity to attain to it. This is the crowning conviction of the Christian Faith regarding men: Christ is the standard man. It offers Christ to men to determine their way of living, and to establish the measurements of character. It takes for its own the words of a Christian poet of recent time:

> The world sits at the feet of Christ,
> Unknowing, blind and unconsoled.
> It yet shall touch his garment's fold,
> And feel the heavenly alchemist
> Transform its very dust to gold.

Chapter VI

The Christian Conviction Regarding Salvation

We have considered the Christian conviction regarding God and man. We are now to consider the third great interest of religion: the Christian conviction regarding the relation between God and man. What this relation ought to be is already clear. Since God is conceived to be a holy, loving Father and man is conceived to be a creation and child of God, the relation of man to God ought to be that of a loyal child to a loving Father. Every thought of God ought to bring joy to man, as thought of his father brings joy to a faithful son. Man ought to be diligent in finding and doing the will of God, placing it first in all his programs, measuring all achievement by it. He ought to find peace in realizing the existence and nearness of God, as any loving son finds peace in the presence of his father. He ought to welcome every indication of God's approval and grieve over any indication of God's disapprobation. This would seem to lie in the very nature of the case.

But whatever may be the logic of the case, the true condition is far otherwise. Men do not think of God lovingly or joyously or eagerly. They think of him with indifference or fear or even animosity, resenting his will or disregarding it at their own pleasure. This is not the way of loyal sons of a loving Father. And all the great religions take this fact as a central one for their

systems. They agree on three things: first, that something is wrong with man; secondly, that it ought to be made right; thirdly, that it can be made right. It is the first item that brings the widest agreement. When Gladstone was asked to suggest the greatest fact to which the human mind could turn, he named the fact of sin and the way of escape from it. A deeply spiritual writer of France has said that "the measure of the profundity of any religion is given by its conception of sin and of the cure of sin." A well known American philosopher finds it a sufficient definition of religion to say that it is the effort of men to find a way of salvation; its great question is, What must I do to be saved? That is what men and nations want when they turn to religion.

But while the great religions agree on the three facts suggested, they differ widely as to what is wrong and as to how it can be made right. These two ideas necessarily go together. Everything turns on what is really wrong, for when that is known it is possible to discuss the ways of making it right. When a religion offers "salvation" to a man, it must be made clear what danger threatened or what wrong condition existed. If one believes that what is wrong is merely ignorance, then the way to save men is to instruct them. If the trouble is weakness, then all that is needed is more strength. If the evil is merely a reminder of earlier and pre-human conditions, "remnants of the ape and tiger," then salvation will consist of patience to wait until further development eliminates these remainders. If the trouble of life is a burden acquired in an earlier incarnation, then salvation will lie in acquiring an excess of merit during this incarnation. If moral evil is merely an illusion, salvation will consist in correcting the mental attitude. Students of the subject will realize that these suggestions have all been seriously made, either singly or in combination. They illustrate

the close connection that must always exist between the idea of sin and the idea of salvation. When religions differ about the thing that is wrong with man, they will naturally differ about the correction of it. The fundamental difference between religions, therefore, is not in their proposal of salvation, but in their idea of human need for salvation—in their idea of what is wrong with humanity.

I

The Christian Faith finds sin as the cause of the wrong relation between man and God and finds the root of sin in selfishness, a self-assertion of man in disregard of his true relationship to God and his fellows. It is the lower asserting itself against the higher, the narrower against the broader, the coarser against the finer. That makes it essentially a break of fellowship, destroying a relationship which ought to exist and which would exist but for this self-assertion which disregards it. Christianity does not find this evil in certain classes of men only, but in all men, somewhere and somehow rooted in the human nature as it is to-day.

1. The place of sin in the human order, as it is understood by the Christian Faith, may be stated in biological terms. In speaking of animal or human characteristics, one may mean either of three things: *(a)* there are characteristics that are purely individual, peculiar to the person or the single being: *(b)* there are characteristics that belong to the strain in which the individual appears, his group within the whole: *(c)* there are characteristics which belong to the type in which the individual appears. Different thinkers have located sin in each of these groups. Some think it purely individual and would not agree to any logical enlargement of experience which declares that it exists in all individuals; they say that this must be proved in each separate case. Some think it a matter of

racial strain, and see no reason why all racial groups should be included without discrimination in the idea of sinfulness. The Christian position has been that sin is unhappily a type characteristic, appearing in its various forms in all men, in essence the same, in manifestation as varied as men themselves are varied. Everywhere, in varying degrees, the fellowship of men with God is broken, fellowship between man and man is disturbed, the inner harmony of each man is lost, and, therefore, everywhere the need for salvation appears. Further, since the need is for correction of the essential root of sin rather than for the change of its external manifestations, it is the Christian belief that one corrective for sin is both logical and feasible. There need not be many cures, since the disease is one and not many.

2. This fundamental selfishness has done damage at three points; within the man himself, in the relation between man and man, and in the relation between man and God. Salvation must correct the damage throughout.

(a) The damage of sin within the man consists of the disordering of his powers, disturbing his inner harmony and so producing unrest. No one fact is more assured than the widespread prevalence of this unrest and inner disturbance. In a rational world the nature of man would be intended to function harmoniously by reason of a proper relation of its powers to each other, the lower yielding to the higher and these in turn to the highest. There are no inherent illegitimate nor improper desires or motives within the human nature. Each is meant to be fulfilled or obeyed in its proper relation to other powers. So persistent are these powers that they assert themselves in every life, and there is no man so evil that he does not at times perform deeds of kindliness and helpfulness, deeds which are in contrast with the prevailing direction of his life. At these times the better and worthier impulses are claiming their

place—only to lose it in the upheaval of the moral order which accompanies sin. For disorder comes when a lower desire asserts itself in rebellion against a higher and more distinctively human impulse, and overrides it. The dethroned impulses are never entirely quiescent; they are always asserting their prerogatives, no matter how they are disregarded. One of the greatest of the English poets describes the condition of a man who has determined that he will no longer give credence to his nobler powers, but will deny faith in the unseen and live as though this world were his whole concern. But just when he feels safest in his decision there comes to him some simple experience, like a radiant sunset, or a beautiful flower, or the death of a friend, and the rejected elements in his nature rise up again and demand attention. No sinner is ever safe from the voice of conscience, demanding that the higher powers must not be prostituted nor neglected.

The Christian Scriptures describe the beginning of sin in the human order in just this form. Interpreters of the account differ as to its historical occurrence, but they agree on its psychological and volitional accuracy. The incident tells us that the earliest human beings found themselves in the presence of a tree of whose fruit they were forbidden to eat, the will of God to that effect having become perfectly clear to them. But they found the fruit, to all seeming, good to eat—a distinct appeal to the physical motive. It was also beautiful to look upon—an appeal to the æsthetic motive. It was to be desired to make one wise—an appeal to the intellectual motive and to ambition for progress. All these were perfectly proper appeals and it is right and necessary that they be recognized and obeyed under proper conditions. But neither of them is the highest nor most distinctive reason for human conduct. Above them stands a motive which represents man's highest relationship, the point at which he comes into con-

tact with the moral universe where God is the supreme personality with whom man is to hold fellowship. That motive operated against taking the fruit, as the incident is recorded, and it was made unmistakably clear. The beginning of sin was when this highest motive was flouted and denied, and lower motives were given the right of way. Then there came inevitable disorder in the nature of the offenders, the hierarchy of rational motives being overturned. And that is the natural history of every sin from the beginning until now, and the same outcome is inevitable. Selfishness conflicts with the balance of power in man. Man is meant to take his proper place with relation to others and to God, but he is meant equally to maintain the right balance of his powers within himself. The flouting of the highest powers is more than a mere incident; it becomes a calamity corrected by no easy effort, requiring the aid of God who gave the nature its order and form.

(b) Selfishness works damage in the relation between a man and his fellows. Every evil in the social order issues from selfishness or ignorance, and much of the ignorance is the direct outcome of selfishness, so that the cure of sin would soon correct social evils of all sorts. In human society there is obviously a duty of self-assertion as there is clearly place for self-regard. When an individual man takes his place in the company of his fellows, in due regard for himself and for them he helps to make the harmonious human society in which he and they find their true happiness and full development. This is the way of peace. But when self-assertion is developed beyond the right regard for others, self-assertion in the individual, in the group, in the nation, over against other individuals, groups or nations, there can be nothing but discord and unhappiness. Such self-assertion leads inevitably to depreciation of the rights and value of others, and for that

reason to failure in giving one's life to others and in receiving freely from others. Selfishness always results in social impoverishment: society loses the ministry which the selfish man ought to render to it, and the selfish man loses the enrichment which society ought to yield to him. It is all loss and no gain, for all its supposed gains could be more largely secured by the spirit of service and sacrifice. Sin becomes ruinous in the relation between man and man.

(c) The same reasoning would show the ruin of selfishness or sin in the relation of man to God. Here is the highest relationship which a moral being can have—to the highest moral reality, to God. the source and center of the moral universe. Taking one's proper attitude toward one's true center of being does not mean loss of the self, but finding it. The case is shown to be all the worse by the Christian conception of God as a holy, loving Father. Refusal to hold a right attitude toward Him will be doubly ruinous, because it involves the rejection of the highest social and moral impulses. Whether the wrong attitude is that of indifference or of hostility, the result is the same. A true father would not know what to choose between cold indifference and direct opposition on the part of his children. The Christian Faith does not find all sin in open offenses willfully committed. It finds sin illustrated quite as clearly in days and months of living as though there were no God, acting as though the will of a Father were a matter of unconcern, using the benefits of his care and love thanklessly. So it is an unimportant matter whether sin be thought of as a violation of law or a violation of love; it is all one. The law is the law of a Father, merely his love made available for daily guidance. Either term can find a place in Christian thinking, for the ultimate relation that should exist between man and God is that of a loyal, loving child to a holy, loving

Father. Sin, selfishness, self-assertion breaks that relation and spoils the moral unity of the universe at that point.

The Christian Faith faces this threefold damage of sin with a proposal of salvation which takes account of all three ruinous effects, within the man, between the man and his fellows, between the man and God. And therefore, for the Christian religion *salvation means the restoring and maintaining of a right fellowship between God and man, and between man and man, and of a true harmony within the nature of the man.* This is a gigantic proposal, but nothing less can be counted the full work of salvation.

3. The work itself is described under various terms. Because sin puts men in bondage, preventing the true life of freedom, the work of Christ is spoken of as redemption, which involves setting slaves or prisoners free. Because sin separates man from God, making man unfit for the counsels of God, the work of Christ is sometimes spoken of as reconciliation. When thought is turned upon the staining of sin, marring the white purity of the human life, the work of Christ is called cleansing. When sin is considered as offense against a righteous law, deserving punishment, the work of Christ is spoken of as forgiveness. Because sin destroys the unity or oneness that ought to exist between God and man and between man and man and within the man himself, requiring for its restoration a due recognition of the rights of the moral order, the work of Christ is described as atonement. All these are merely different ways of describing the one fact of salvation.

4. The Christian Faith lays stress on another important consideration—that all sin is offense against God. If a man does wrong to himself, it is a sin against God; not because he is himself God or to be identified with God in any sense, but because God gave him his powers and

established their order, and he holds them in trust for God. If the owner of a watch left it for use in the hands of another man, then an injury to the watch damages it, but it wrongs the owner. Every sin against the unity or harmony of the nature violates the rights of the author of the nature and so becomes a sin against God. So with offenses against another man; God gave him his rights and set other men into relation to him. Wronging him does damage to him but it violates the rights of God in his moral order. The strong accent which the Christian Faith lays on sin as offense against God does not imply disregard of its individual and social aspects. Yet it may be a duty at times to violate social or even natural requirements in the interest of obligation to God. It is obviously a duty to care for one's physical life, to preserve it from destruction, to maintain it in its fullness; yet higher obligations may often justify the forfeiting of individual privileges. All martyrs are instances of this; the death of the Founder of the Christian Faith would be an outstanding instance. At one time during his earthly teaching Christ called attention to the fact that conditions might arise which would demand drastic treatment of powers and habits which would otherwise be innocent. His illustrations were drawn from the physical powers: there might come times when the hand or the foot or the eye might need to be given up in order to preserve the higher life. His implication was that all conduct ought to be regulated by the needs of this distinctively human element, even at the cost of other and proper elements in the human nature. In a sound moral order, higher obligations always supercede or control lower ones. The will of God would outrank any conflicting individual desire. In the same way, there may come times when the will of society must be disregarded because it is not in harmony with the will of God. At such times, though he may be punished by

society, yet the offender will feel within himself the peace of a right relation to God. Whenever a social requirement contradicts a plain requirement of the will of God, the duty of a moral being is plain. He must obey God rather than men. The Christian Faith has been established in almost every land by men who faced this duty and did it courageously, taking the consequences without complaint. No man could be counted morally right if he obeyed all natural laws as though they were final, nor if he accepted all social requirements as though they were final, for neither of them offers the final test to a moral being. Only the will of the highest moral reality can be final. Everything has to be held subject to that. Sin is an offense against the will of God, no matter what other will it may obey, and unless the will of God is offended, sin is not involved.

II

Any plan for setting the relations right between man and God must begin either with man or with God. 1. It would seem wholly natural that the movement should begin with man. He has done the wrong; shall he not make it right? The Christian Faith finds all the wrong on the man's side, none on the side of the loving Father. The logic of the case seems clear—man should correct the wrong which he himself has done. And acting on this conviction, earnest men in all parts of the world have sought out ways of making atonement for sin and error. They have sought atonement by mental, social and physical processes. They have swung head downward over flames, they have laid themselves on beds of spikes, they have made long pilgrimages through incredible hardships, they have mutilated their bodies, they have submitted themselves to lasting pain—that they may find inner peace instead of inner unrest, that they may have peace with

God instead of fear of his just wrath. Whole systems of reconciliation of the gods have been developed, programs of well-doing over against the ill-desert which sincere men feel. And for all this every sincere man will have nothing but profound respect. There is too little earnestness in the world in behalf of the deep things of life to permit discount or discredit for such efforts after righteousness and peace. But this is not the Christian way.

2. The Christian teaching is that the provision for making peace in a sinful world starts with God and not with man, and is accomplished by God and not by man. God is the offended one and man is the offender, yet God seeks to recover the fellowship which self-assertion among men has broken. And when it is carefully considered, this is the only way in which any reconciliation can occur. Forgiveness can never be earned; it is always a free gift. No matter what an offender can do in any social group, his restoration to the group is by the grace of the group, not by his own action. Whatever conditions may attach to his forgiveness are imposed by those whom he has offended. If any offender should make good the offense, there would be no room for forgiveness, but offenses cannot be made good in their moral quality. It does not atone for a theft if a thief restores the stolen goods. It does not atone for a lie if the liar acknowledges its falsehood and declares the truth again. It does not atone for injustice if a later justice is done. All these are roughly accepted among men as the nearest an offender can come to doing the impossible, but it is clear in the very statement of them that the thing that was morally wrong is not changed nor obliterated by later actions of the offender. If he is forgiven, it must be at the will of the offended ones, and they must determine the way in which that forgiveness is received. When, therefore, the Christian Faith finds provision for salvation beginning with God, it is merely dis-

covering the natural way by which human forgiveness is granted.

3. The Christian Faith teaches that this salvation was the purpose of the coming of Jesus Christ into human life and of all that he did while he was in the world. He was born for this, he taught his great truths for it, he did his works of wonder and kindliness as part of it, he died for it, he came out of the grave for it and his continued presence and power in the world to-day are for the same work of salvation. Christ did not come to the world to indicate any change in God or to produce what did not already exist in the heart of God, but to reveal what God is and what his desire is for men, and to accomplish on the earth the purpose of God which had been in his heart from eternity. And all of this is connected with the fact of human sin and the need for forgiveness. There might have been need for Christ's coming if there had been no sin in the world, as there might have been place for religion apart from sin, but it is certain that it is the fact of sin and the need for adequate treatment of it that explain the form of the Christian Faith to-day and, indeed, the form of all the religions of the world. As the Christian Book phrases it, in a striking passage, Christ came to take away sin. He does reveal the reality of God, and he does establish a norm for humanity, but the heart of his service to the human race is his bringing of the forgiving love of God to sinful men, his provision for restoring and maintaining the true fellowship between God and man and between man and man, and for restoring harmony within the nature of each man.

4. While all of the life of Christ has part in this service, the Christian Faith has from the first laid heaviest accent on his death as the point where his work came to its climax or focus, the event in which the saving love of God crystallizes. This explains the universal Christian

symbol—the cross. No other symbol has ever been so satisfactory to Christian belief, though many of them exist, each with a rich meaning. Here, in the symbol of sacrificial death, the Christian Faith finds the sharpest expression of salvation. Christ himself anticipated this, for in one of his talks before his death he said that if he should be lifted up from the earth, that is, if he should be crucified, he would draw all men to himself. Something in all men responds to self-forgetting sacrifice. Probably the most magnetic element in the Christian appeal is this one. In an earlier lecture reference was made to the eminent Christian Indian, Dr. K. C. Chatterjee. It is interesting to learn that it was this element in the Christian appeal that won his allegiance—the sacrificial death of Christ for the sake of sinful men.

III

No single explanation of the death of Christ has ever exhausted its meaning, though each explanation includes a part of the truth. (a) On the physical side, his death was like that of any man, caused by pain and internal disturbance of the proper functioning of the system. A physician would say that any man under the same conditions would have died, and that is true. (b) A jurist would point out that Christ's death came about by reason of an unjust and irregular application of a severe code of law. A ruler without moral courage to resist injustice, weakly yielding to clamor against a victim, would bring a man to his death anywhere exactly as Christ was brought to his death. And that is true. (c) A student of social movements would note that Christ came into conflict with the social order of his time at points where that order was very strong and where its advocates would least brook disturbance, and that those advocates put him to death, according to the custom of the time. A rigid social order

does not so frequently kill men to-day, but it has other ways of getting rid of them, and every man takes his life in his hands when he forces an issue with a strongly intrenched social order; it will do him to death as it did Jesus to death. (d) An ethicist sees in the death of Christ an instance of faithfulness to duty, a person bearing his witness to truth even at the cost of his life, and he notes that such a fate may await any man who is equally loyal. This also is true regarding the death of Christ.

But no one of these explanations, nor all of them together, can set the death of Christ out in the light as Christian believers see it. There is in his death something that brings a sense of the forgiving love of God and of release from the disturbance of life and from the deadly grip of sin. As one of the earliest Christian writers said, "Christ died for our sins," not merely because of our sins but for their sakes and for the ending of them. What is it about the death of Christ which bears so heavily on the fact of salvation? Three central truths emerge regarding it.

1. The death of Christ reveals and expresses the unlimited and unreckoning love of God. The Christian Scripture makes it plain that it was love that lay at the root of the whole fact of Christ. There is no room in the discussion for any word about an angry God who is seeking to take vengeance on some one so that he can save others. The only anger or wrath that is thinkable in connection with it is moral opposition to sin, an opposition increased by love of sinners who are being ruined by sinfulness. All sincere love may be measured by the opposition the lover feels to anything that injures the object of his love. Of course, a moral God must oppose immorality, exactly as every moral man must oppose it. But this involves no hatred of men in God any more than it does in men. The Christian Faith does not conceive

of Christ as a third person between God and man, who is bearing the sin of men in order to placate God or to win his forgiveness. Instead, it conceives Christ as God himself come into human life to bring an unlimited forgiveness and an unmeasured love. An early Christian writer expressed an accepted idea when he said that no man has greater love than to lay down his life for his friends, but he added that God's love is greater than this because he lays down his life for his enemies, sinful men. That is the way Christian believers have always understood it. The death of Christ is not an experience imposed on him by God, but an experience in which he was expressing the love of God, a love which is sacrificial and knows no limits. The final experience through which human life can pass is that of death; if the helping of men demands death, the bearing of the final experience, the love of God is adequate for it. He also, entering human life, accepts its full demands. All that any man has to experience he accepts as his portion. In so doing he expresses his love. Let men slay him if they will, he does not lose his love for them. For Christian believers, the cross of Christ is the great seal of the unmeasured love of God for men.

2. The death of Christ shows also the readiness of God to take upon himself the full meaning and consequence of human sin. It is sometimes urged that no one can take the consequence of sin but the sinner himself. The fact is, instead, that the sinner always takes the smallest part of the consequence of his sin. Immediately a sin is committed it passes out of the control of the sinner and becomes a working factor in the moral order, doing its damage far beyond his reach. Think of a familiar instance: the father of a family committing a wrong against his employers, robbing them of their money and wasting it in evil ways. He is arrested and declares himself ready to take the consequences. He—take the conse-

quences! And what of his wife—shamed and humiliated; what of his children—pointed at with pity or contempt by playmates and others; what of the firm—crippled and limited; what of the church—its name dragged in the dust before the whole city; what of the community itself—compelled to support one who should be its support; what about young men—their ideals of religion as a protection against evil shattered? The consequences to the offender are serious and lasting, but in the bulk of their damage they are less than the consequences which others bear. The simple fact is that no man can ever overtake the meaning of his own sin; it gets out into the moral order, injuring it at countless points. And no one can take on himself the consequences of sin except Almighty God, for only he maintains the moral order and can meet the damage which the sin of man will do. Every sin strikes at the roots of life and involves an attack on the whole moral system, because if it is followed the moral system is defeated. The death of Christ shows God's readiness to meet sin at its worst.

But why death? The Christian Faith points out that this is the ultimate consequence of every sin. An early Christian writer phrased it in this way: "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Most sins are never finished; counteracting influences come into play to thwart their ultimate outcome. But death is in every sin, and something fine is killed whenever a man sins. Theft destroys social stability; impurity kills human relationships; falsehood murders social confidence; jealousy numbs the finest instincts of human appreciation—trace any offense to its logical outcome and it means death. If Christ was to take upon himself the full meaning of sin, then he must undergo the experience of death, all that death means to men. This is the end of the road which sin makes a man travel; Christ traveled the road to its end.

Yet it is here that the resurrection of Christ after his death becomes essential. Christ became a Savior because he took the full consequence of sin and showed himself to be master of it. What ruins men came upon him and it did not ruin him; he bore it all and proved conqueror over it. Through death he came into life again—not merely as all men survive death and pass on into another life, but as an obvious conqueror reasserting his power in the midst of the scenes where he had suffered. It does not meet the Christian idea to say that the early disciples somehow became sure of the continuing life of their Master; they had never doubted that, either of him or of themselves. It was his return to human life again, transformed and victorious, passing through what had always been defeat and showing himself stronger than death—this gave them their assurance under which the Christian Faith began its career. They saw in it their hope for ultimate victory over all that sin had meant.

3. The death of Christ reveals that a forgiving God deals with sin as sin deserves to be dealt with. In the nobler human moods men do not want to be forgiven and restored to fellowship with God or men on cheap terms. They do not welcome the disregarding of their offenses nor ask to have sin treated as unimportant when they know it is important. No true-hearted man wishes to be received into the favor of those whom he has wronged by any process that leaves his wrong unrecognized or lightly treated. Nor does he ask to have his own limitations taken as the standard for the treatment of his evil. He wants the sin dealt with as it deserves to be dealt with, not merely as he can deal with it. All any honest man can do regarding his sin he wants to do, but when he sees that his sin has gone beyond his control and is bringing consequences which he cannot overtake, he cannot be happy in being taken into favor as though there

were nothing to be done but the little he can do. The Christian Faith finds in the death of Christ an assurance that man can be forgiven on terms of complete self-respect. God has not disregarded sin; he has not forgiven cheaply. If such treatment of sin had not been required by the moral nature of God, it would have been required by the moral nature of all true men. A recent writer remarks that sound religion shows man that in the end he and God stand face to face for eternity and can adjust their relations on no basis less than ultimate and perfect righteousness. The largest philosophical problem of forgiveness is in the relation between grace and true righteousness. It is expressed in a Bible passage to the effect that the death of Christ occurred in order that God might be just and yet justify sinful men. It is a clue to the philosophical problem suggested. Forgiveness can be given by grace and yet the forgiving one may be wholly righteous, provided the offense is borne by the one who forgives. Its consequences are not laid on some one else. They are taken by God himself, the only one who can take them. When a penitent man knows that his sin has been taken with the seriousness that all his moral nature demands, he can be restored to fellowship with God and the moral order on terms that leave him grateful and yet self-respecting.

Part of this self-respect rests in the assurance that just such an experience is suited to the outcome of sin. The death of Christ is a revelation to the moral sense of man of what sin does. Here was unstained goodness, and sin sought to kill it. Here was unwavering love, and sin rejected it. Here was unsullied righteousness and sin wrecked it. This was the appearance. The resurrection revealed that sin had been met where it does deepest damage and had been overcome. As one of the early writers expressed it, "Death had been swallowed up in victory."

Love can bear up under any such experience and can accept the wreck of sin without being wrecked. Sin is dealt with as it deserves to be dealt with; it is met on its own terms and is overcome. In the presence of such a demonstration, humanity can come back into right fellowship with a forgiving God without humiliation.

No analysis can exhaust the meaning of the death of Christ for the Christian experience, but at least those three elements are in it, making it a redeeming reality.

IV

When this offer of renewed fellowship with God is provided, there remains the acceptance of it by man. This acceptance is what the Christian religion describes as faith—trusting the love that is offered, accepting the readiness of God to take the meaning of the sin upon himself, recognizing the just treatment of sin, a treatment that might have come upon any sinful man so far as he could have borne it, but which has been taken upon himself by God in Christ. It is in this way that the atonement of Christ becomes an actual experience of men. It deepens the sense of sin, for it reminds believers that they are not earning their peace but are accepting it as a gift from God. As a recent Christian writer has said: "We are not moral heroes with a noble record, who with shining faces go to meet our great reward and happy consummation in God. Instead, we can only say, God be merciful to us, sinners!" Forgiveness, under these conditions, becomes a gift, a matter of grace or unmerited favor. It cannot be earned; it can be only accepted. Sometimes it is said that a religion like Christianity is difficult to "live up to." But it is really far easier to obey than a religion in which the blessings are to be earned by strenuous efforts. The only religion which can be "lived up to" is a religion of grace; no religion of works could possibly be perfectly followed.

If something has to be done in order to gain religious peace, then one is put upon anxious conduct to insure the right course of deeds; whereas if fellowship with God is his gracious gift, it can be accepted by the simplest and made a present fact in life.

There follow from the acceptance of this gracious gift of forgiveness in Christ the three results that are required in salvation.

1. Of course there comes a new sense of right fellowship with God. Here is no angry God of whom the sinner must stand in fear. Here is a loving God ready to receive offenders back into his favor if they will accept his provision of forgiveness. He does not set before them any scale of punishment or of suffering by which they must be measured. He does not require any course of deserving deeds which they must perform. All he asks is that they accept his costly pardon. It does not provide for any waiving of the sinfulness of evil nor for any compromising of the holiness of God. Instead, it magnifies both sin and holiness. But it is the holy God who in Fatherly love assures sinful men of his desire for their fellowship. The mere acceptance of such an offer of forgiveness brings one back into right relationship with God. No one would accept it unless he wanted the fellowship which it brings with it. But merely wanting it, under the gracious offer of God, is equivalent to having it.

2. Naturally, also, with this acceptance there comes peace in the life of the man himself. The original meaning of sin was the refusal of the true relationship among the powers of the soul, whereby the lower desires took place above the will of God. Now the will of God is restored again to its place; it becomes the first rule of life, the highest motive of conduct. In its presence, all the other motives of life take their rightful place. And this means inner harmony and peace. Here emerges one phase

of the personal meaning of salvation which is of great importance in Christian thinking: the fact that salvation is conceived under three aspects. It is an event, a process and a consummation. It is like all true relationships among personal beings: it begins at a certain point, it develops from that point, and it reaches a full experience in which it gains its full meaning. When Christian writers speak of salvation in this personal meaning, it is necessary to know which aspect of it is in mind. *(a)* Sometimes it is spoken of as an experience which one may have at a given point in time. Many Christian believers know the exact time and place where their salvation was accomplished, though this is not a necessary part of the experience. Most Christian believers cannot tell just when nor where their right relation with God was established, though they recognize the event in which it did occur. They were reared in families of adherents and surrounded by the institutions of the Christian Faith, so that they take their relation to it as a matter of course. So accustomed to it have they become that they have not the keen sense of the importance of the relationship to God which it involves that might be expected. It is like the natural attitude toward the prevalence of air around one's body—nothing is more important to life and yet it is so familiar that days are sure to pass in any normal life when the very existence of this essential element is unrecognized. This may be the final beauty of one's religion, when it is part of the very life one lives, but it may also result in the lessening of enthusiasm and fervor in its behalf. This insensitiveness does not alter the fact that the right relation to God begins at some point, recognized or not. It is merely emphasized in the case of those Christian believers who can locate the time and place of their salvation, and these believers would naturally appear in large numbers in lands where the Christian Faith

is not yet woven into the social fabric so that one can come easily and quietly into relation to it.

(b) Christians sometimes speak of being more and more saved, or of salvation as being more or less fully accomplished, implying that their salvation at any given moment is incomplete. They mean by this that their right relationship with God has not yet mastered the whole of their lives, though it is mastering life gradually. They are like a country that has been in rebellion; there is a time when the rightful ruler begins the process of subduing the land, winning a group here and another there to his allegiance, and going from group to group until all accept his rule. From the beginning he is its ruler, but his power grows with time. Human nature seldom forms new relationships suddenly. Instead, it spreads a new relationship over all of its life by slow and gradual processes. Jesus used the figure of a bit of yeast placed in dough, which gradually spreads by chemical development until it affects the entire bowl of dough. That is the way in which the new Christian relationship spreads—like a new and pervasive life which, after an illness, little by little makes itself felt in all parts of the body, or like a new and revolutionary idea which spreads through a community after a long stagnation. This fact ought to be kept in mind when individual Christians are being judged. It is not wise to measure the complete work by any single stage of its progress. Some early Christian literature consists of letters written to members of churches who were very defective in their personal and social lives, yet the leaders welcomed them as true Christians in whom the process of salvation was only begun. They were spoken of as "just escaping from the old life," emerging from the former condition, but not yet fully manifesting the results of their new relationship to God. Indeed, by any full understanding of

the ultimate standards of the Christian Faith, none of its adherents is a final representative of it.

This explains the persistent offer of this Faith to the world hand in hand with an open confession of the faults and failings of its adherents. In lands where Christian believers abound, there are evils which they admit with shame, evils in their personal lives, evils in the social order. Yet these believers recognize the faults as lying within themselves and not in the Faith which they profess. They are in the process of salvation. It might even be that an individual Christian might not be better in conduct or life at a given period than a non-Christian, and yet it might be supremely worth while to be a Christian. Two men might be in a hospital, one of them more weak and ill than the other, yet the weaker may be getting well and the other sinking into death. Two men may stand on a mountain side, one above the other, yet the lower may be going up the mountain while the other is going down, and after a while it will be seen that the lower has the advantage of the higher. The real test of life is not where one is at a given moment, but in what direction one is going. It is the principle of life which Christ gives that makes one a Christian, and it may not be manifested so fully at all times and places as it deserves to be, but if the principle is there it will work itself out in due course.

(c) The Christian Faith furnishes an ideal toward which the developing life is directed, and salvation may be thought of as a consummation of the whole course of life. Since Christ is the standard man, salvation at its fullest means attainment of likeness to him in spirit and character. Christian believers have not always agreed as to the time when this may be accomplished. Some have asserted it as a present or instantaneous fact. Some have claimed it as an achievement of mature life. Most have seen it as a consummation to be constantly approached during

this life and to be fully achieved in the after-life. But there has been no doubt among Christian adherents as to its ultimate certainty.

3. The third result of the atonement of Christ appears in the new and right relationship established between man and man. This result is to furnish the material for the two following lectures, one discussing the relationship established among Christian believers, and the other the relationship which the Christian Faith would help to establish in the world at large, among all men of all races. Here it is important only to point out that this social aspect of Christian salvation is an essential part of it. The commonplace fact that society is made up of individuals does not explain fully the relation between the personal and social elements in salvation, for it must be added that each individual is himself a social product and is as truly dependent for his type and character on society as society is dependent on him for its very existence. The common Christian ideal is "a saved man in a saved environment." There are certain parts of the right life which cannot be expressed without right social conditions, and change of unworthy social conditions is inevitable if personal lives are altered. In the later hours of his earthly life Christ said that he would not pray to have his disciples taken out of the world, but only that they be kept from the evil of the world. Earlier he had compared his disciples to salt and light and the influence they have on their surroundings, which implied the close relation he meant his disciples to have to the world. It is clear, therefore, that the work of salvation will not be complete until the relation between man and man is made right.

Christ's way of salvation is adapted to accomplish this. It furnishes a standard of relationship which is the outcome of unselfish love for others. There is in it no room for minute discussion of a balance of wrong on one side or

another of a vexed and divisive issue. No such balance obstructed the movement of the holy God in providing salvation for sinful men. The only possible thought in human relationships must be one of sacrifice and service. No permanent social order can be formed apart from such thinking. And no man who deeply realizes what his right relation to God means and how it was accomplished can fail to offer himself as an agent in bringing about an equally peaceful relation with his fellows. It is far more complicated, for no man can control the feelings and desires of his fellows. A new social relationship cannot be built up from one side alone; if men oppose it, it must always be partial. Just as the sacrifice of Christ does not force any man into right relation with God, but only makes it possible for a man to enter into that relationship if he will, so the true and right social order cannot be forced on any group. But those who believe in it and work for it can see what it would mean to all men if it were accepted. It is part of the Christian idea of salvation that society shall be saved as well as individuals, and until the new order of righteousness is established the saving work of Christ will not have received its full application and result.

Chapter VII

THE CHRISTIAN CONVICTION IN ITS HISTORICAL EXPRESSION

Our discussion has brought us to the fourth great interest of religion. What is the Christian conviction regarding the relation between man and man? The answer must fall into two forms: the relation which the Christian Faith establishes among its own adherents, together with the attitude which those adherents are expected to take toward other men; and the human relation which this Faith proposes and seeks to establish in the world at large. The former of these answers is the concern of this lecture; the latter will occupy our attention in the closing lecture.

In the first lecture of his series we noted the fact that Christianity is a religion with a definite historical origin. It sets out from an historical Figure in the midst of a story of religious development told in an historical Book. From time to time it goes back to these specially sacred historical fountains, correcting its current condition by them. But it holds another close relation to history in that it has been expressed historically under varying conditions for nineteen hundred years. That is not a long period, as the history of religions goes. Of all the major religions of the world, Christianity is next to the youngest, only Islam having a shorter historical life. In the presence of many of the older faiths of the world, both Christianity and Islam seem new and recent. However, two

milleniums furnish opportunity for some distinctive judgments upon religious institutions and conditions. Just now we are to discuss the expression of the Christian Faith in its years of history.

The story of this expression is not one of unmixed glory. No one knows better than Christian adherents that there have been bad chapters, during which so much else was intermingled with Christianity that it seemed to involve a sheer failure of the Faith itself. In such periods there seemed little to offer to the world, because so little was accomplished among the adherents of the Faith themselves. In larger and smaller areas there has been need for reformations, and they have occurred as they were needed. It must be accented, however, that these reformations have come from within the Faith itself. It has proved to be a self-correcting religion, a Faith that carried regenerative power within itself, never needing correction by forces from without. It has been like a man whose early training has implanted in him true principles of right conduct, so that when he falls into wrong ways he has the power to arouse himself and apply his right principles without police or judicial corrective, as compared to a man untrained who must be told from without what he should do and how he should do it, and even be made to do it. One ground of assurance of the divine origin of the Christian Faith is the fact that it has bred its own reformers, and they have conceived their task to be not the constructing of a new faith, but the recovery of the original Faith. Underneath its evils they have found running the pure current of its original fountains.

This need for reformation should not surprise those who realize the nature of the Christian religion. Three facts go far toward explaining the recurring need. 1. Christianity is a spiritual rather than a formal faith. It has forms and institutions, but they are rather its

agencies than its essence. Christ once said that God is a Spirit and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. He added that God is always seeking such worshipers. Christianity is essentially a fellowship of the spirits of men with God and with each other. But spiritual forces are always compelled to express themselves in more or less definite forms and institutions. When they do so there ensues the danger that the form shall harden or stiffen until it cramps and limits the spirit itself. An idea can become a victim of its own expression. An institution can become an end in itself and loom larger in the minds of its adherents than the vital reality which brought it into being. From time to time this informing spirit must break the limitations which are put upon it by its own historical expressions and either correct those expressions or form new ones. Meanwhile, the process of delivery brings great distress and distrust to those who have unconsciously identified the expression with the spirit, the body with the life. Sometimes, also, it brings wild license to those who do not realize how certainly the old forms did and do involve the true spirit. But through it all there is evidence of the continuing spirit which is asserting itself. Nowhere does this familiar experience reveal itself more clearly than in Christian history. It has been necessary from time to time for the Christian spirit to assert itself against some of its own adherents and some of its own institutions and customs. But the movement has been from within. And if the occasion should arise again, which will surely occur if the institutions are not perpetually guarded against over-accent, we may be confident that again the corrective forces will issue from within.

2. Another fact helps to explain the recurring need for this corrective energy: that the Christian Faith covers every phase of life, expressing the whole personality. But institutions everywhere tend to accent one phase or another

according to the dominating personality which controls them. Moreover, they tend to develop personalities of a certain sort, over-watchful of the traits which have become important in the institutions and neglectful of other traits which are required for the full-rounded man. Against this narrowing of accent the Faith is sure to assert itself soon or late, either in the interest of the neglected accent or in the interest of the whole personality. Every attempt to shut the Christian Faith into narrow channels meets failure and correction. These become reformation movements. The Faith has beeen compared to a stream making its way down the mountain side and across the plain toward the sea. It may often be checked in its movement and held back by a hindering boulder until it has gathered depth and momentum either to sweep the boulder out of the way or to flow above it, but if its fountains still flow it will find its way over every obstacle and past all the devices that would restrict it, until it reaches the sea. The figure applies well to the history of a vital Faith such as Christianity. It has no unbroken history of triumph, but it is never stopped nor wholly checked. Always it is making its way onward in the current of history. Sometimes its hindrances are the very institutions in which it has expressed itself in the past, sometimes its own adherents hinder it, sometimes the obstacle is the world condition which it has come to correct. Its believers sadly admit the failure they have made in expressing it in their own lives and institutions, but they believe that it cannot be wholly checked nor finally hindered from its spread over the whole earth.

3. One other explanation of the occasional need for corrective periods in the expression of the Christian Faith will appear in the closing lecture, namely, that no religion which is intended to become a world Faith can expect its full development and permanence until it comes nearer

its goal than the Christian Faith has yet attained. In the history of the Christian Faith there have been many discoveries of new depths in the Faith itself. When minds of all nations have been turned to the study of the sacred Book and of the central Figure of the Christian Faith, we may hope that new strength will be given to the Faith. It requires the whole world to be a worthy scene for the work of such a Figure as Christ. The whole Faith will not reach its whole power until it reaches the whole world. In the nature of the case, so long as part of the power of the Faith is not being exerted, it may be expected that errors may creep in which will need correction.

But after all these things are said, the adherents of the Christian Faith think with sorrow of the unworthy chapters in its history. They still count it the most glorious and worthy history of a religion which they know, but they earnestly wish the blots upon it did not exist. The fault is with their use of the Faith, their faulty devotion to it, their misunderstanding of it, their lack of zeal for it. The Faith which they profess is their own severest judge, and they are themselves the severest judges of the adverse periods of Christian history. They rejoice to feel that they have been freemen in their Faith, never forced by it, but rather commanded and won by it. Even their failures are a testimonial to the liberty which their Faith has given them.

In the course of its history the Christian Faith has expressed itself in three special ways: in an institution—the Church; in a declaration—the Creed; in a movement—the expansion of Christianity both extensively and intensively. Each expression was inevitable in view of the Faith itself. The institution was inevitable as the outcome of its principle of love, whereby a brotherhood must be formed, and of its need for an agency of ministry to its own adherents and to the world about. The expression

in a creed was inevitable because of the appeal of the Faith to the intellectual life and because of its need of bearing witness to the world and of framing a bond of unity among its adherents. The expansion was inevitable because Christianity is essentially a life, and life must grow or die. These three historical expressions of the Faith must now concern us.

I

The establishing of a Church was part of the life purpose of Jesus Christ, the Founder of the Christian Faith. There is a dramatic scene in the story of his life when his disciples had at last come to see his inherent worth, whereupon he exclaimed that now he would be ready to build his church. Almost immediately after his death and resurrection, the Church came into existence with a very simple organization which grew as occasion arose. As churches are mentioned in the early record, they are simply different local groups of believers who were drawn together by natural bonds of brotherhood and in obedience to what they felt to be the will and wish of Christ. A Western scholar has defined the Church in its fundamental meaning in these terms: "The Church is the company of all those in every age who are joined to Christ in faith and love, and who labor for the ends which he seeks." Such a company could not fail to form into groups, and this grouping occurred immediately for the sake of witnessing to their Master and for mutual helpfulness. At the same time all these local groups were evidently considered as parts of one total fact, the Church. The institution had, therefore, a divine aspect, issuing from the purpose of the Founder of the Faith, and a human aspect, assuming such forms as conditions helped to determine. These forms have become greatly complicated and widely divergent to-day. Observers may well ask whether it is

proper to speak of "The Church," when there seems no such thing but only a series of churches, sometimes appearing in unchristian rivalry, sometimes even refusing to recognize each other. Earnest Christian adherents offer no defense for the division of Christian believers into so many and such opposing groups as may be found in many sections of the world. There is no comfort for them in the fact that this is a phenomenon of all living religions. Thus far no religion of the world has remained a vital force without divisions among its adherents. Christians would rejoice if they were the only offenders at this point, but the fact of divisions among religious adherents is known to all students of religion. Sects and denominations are actually less remote from each other in Christianity than in some other faiths. Animosities which may have marked their earlier history are much alleviated now, and without yielding earnestness in conviction there are in most places methods of intimate relationship which promise that the succeeding generations may know far less of strife and far more of fellowship.

The existence of these divisions among Christian adherents is the outcome of two counterbalancing forces which operate on every Christian believer—the force of independence and the force of brotherhood. They may be illustrated in the two forces which operate on the planet on which humanity lives—one force drawing the earth toward the sun and its heat and gases, the other force drawing the earth away from the sun and its warmth and control. Either of these forces, operating alone or in excess, would mean the ruin of the human race; it is only as they operate with a fine balance that the earth swings in its orbit and humanity continues to exist. (a) There is in the Christian Faith a strong accent on the dignity of the individual and his direct relation to God. Christianity does not

yield well to human dictation nor to arbitrary group mastery. Unless group control clearly recognizes the rights of the individual, unless existing authority frankly provides for wide divergence of personal views and expressions, there will be rebellion against them on the ground of the right of each man to have unhindered relation to God and unhindered opportunity to express that relation in ways that he thinks pleasing to God. Whatever is to be said against the present unhappy divisions within the Church, at least this is true: that they represent the spirit of democracy, the right of any man or group of men to be true to what he or they may find essential to true worship. Liberty is a very precious thing and it is specially promised to Christian believers. When they know the truth, the truth is meant to make them free. Jesus said that he came that his followers might have life and have it abundantly. But abundant life is always resisting anything that cramps and limits it. It is always breaking out in new places and demanding new liberty.

(b) This force of independence could not be safely left to itself without the counterbalancing force of brotherhood. The effect of over-accent on liberty can be seen in the breaking up of the Christian order in ways that clearly violate the spirit of brotherhood. This counterbalancing force would never prevent differences and divergences among Christian adherents, but it would always tend to maintain the unity of believers. It is the failure of this sense of brotherhood and the exaggeration of the sense of individual liberty that explains many of the divisions in the Christian Church. Christian believers need not agree with each other at all points, but they have a religion whose central principle is love, and they acknowledge with penitence that their earnest striving for what they believe to be the truth of God has been often embittered by factional strife. They have sometimes

tried to win the battles of love with the weapons of hate; they have sometimes tried to heal the rents in the garment of Christ by tearing it more widely. But here again their own faith is their severest judge. They have not been true to it in the very effort to be true to it. Other motives have entered in which have spoiled the fine spirit of independence which their Faith bred among them.

Yet, as a matter of fact, this is one of the strongest messages of Christianity to the present world: that love does not require uniformity, that divergence does not prohibit love. One of the earliest writers uses a fine figure for this in comparing the Church to a human body with different organs, unlike each other and yet all related to each other, accenting different functions of the one life, yet all directed by one head and warmed by the blood from one heart. He carries on the figure by suggesting that Christ himself is the Head, under whose direction the whole body must function. No one part of it can rightly suggest that it is more important than another part. Each needs the others. This is what the Christian Church was meant to exemplify before the world and what increasingly in these days it is exemplifying. It is what the world itself needs. Always there are advocates of one phase or the other—some considering that unity is the principal thing, some that liberty of divergence is the principal thing. But neither is the principal thing, because each is essential. It is like asking whether patriotism or world fellowship is the principal thing. We need both—the centering of love on a nation, and the broadening of it to the world. The Christian Faith proposes the union of the two, liberty and unity, difference and love, divergence in opinion and unity in spirit. It is not in the Christian program to reduce all churches to one form, but only to bring them all into a true unity as The Church.

There is nothing in the nature or the history of divisions within the Church which makes this impossible, and with the widening of the life of the Church its adherents believe it will come. The divisions have come about through three divergences: in organization, in religious practices and in declarations of faith. In each case the differences have seemed to involve diverse interpretation of the nature of the Church, but they have seldom included serious differences as to the nature of Christianity itself. And observers should note that with few exceptions there is no inclination to deny the essential Christian character of persons in other sections of the Church. It may not be good logic to refuse to be in the same church with a man whose Christianity you do not doubt, but at any rate it is something to acknowledge his Christianity. And when the differences are all taken in the right spirit, as expressions of a spirit of liberty, there will still be room in any such faith as Christianity for such a range as may include the simplicity of the Friends or Quakers and the ceremonials of the Romanists or the Anglicans, the creedal accent of Presbyterians and the non-creedal accent of the Congregationalists, the rigid literalism of the Baptists and the less rigid practices of the Methodists. So long as we freely declare that this is the way in which the Christian spirit may express itself, we are within the bounds of true brotherhood. It is when we say that some one way is the only way in which the Christian spirit must express itself that we pass those bounds.

The newer lands of the Christian Faith will teach the older ones some vital lessons here, showing the way to unity without the complications of historical memories and experiences. Certainly nothing could be more tragical than for these new lands to adopt the divisions and differences that have grown up in older lands. A Christian

leader in a Christian land has expressed the truth well in these words:

> Let us suppose for a moment that by some great cataclysm all those forms in which the Christian religion has been outwardly set forth in the past—the spontaneous words and acts of devotion, the creeds of the thinkers, the liturgies of public worship, the regular customs, the moral codes, the types of organization, and the methods of work popularly accepted—were suddenly to pass away to-day. What then? The Christian religion would be none the less with us to-morrow. There might be some confusion and perplexity for a time, but that great power which we are accustomed to call the Spirit of Christ would remain in men's hearts and would soon begin to adjust itself to the new conditions and demands that must arise. Christianity is nothing if it be not ceaselessly creative of the new. Hence, under the circumstances, it would surely begin at once to forge for itself new forms for utterance, as surely as active children will discover new ways for playing with one another if there be no person to teach them the old. It would clothe its life in these forms and through them it would be effectively propagated in the world again. These new forms would probably resemble some of those that had passed away, but they would be very different because the people using them would be very different from the Christians of the past in respect both to inward life and to outer conditions.

This describes quite accurately what Christians of Christian lands hope may occur in the new lands, as they develop a Christian constituency. They want this new Christian group to have full benefit of all their history,

to use it or to abandon it as the Spirit of Christ within them may guide. There seems little use for the newer groups to make the old mistakes or attempt the closed passages which look so attractive, and therefore they offer their experience for what it may be worth. These nineteen hundred years have not been without the guidance of the Spirit of God, and the history is more glorious than dark, with far more achievements than failures. Yet the adverse experiences need not be repeated, and the hearts of multitudes of Christian adherents in older lands are with the thoughtful believers of the newer lands when they claim the right and duty to frame such church life and organization as the Spirit of Christ may dictate, unhindered by traditions and demands from their older brethren. The Church which should be formed in all these lands should be indigenous, self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. Visitors from other lands are to lay no controlling hands on it. They are to be its helpers, not its governors.

II

The second historical manifestation of the Christian conviction is in its creed, its declaration of belief. The creed is a witness to the intellectual aspect of the Faith. A Western scholar has recently pointed out that "men have always intellectualized their religion—inevitably, for man is incurably intellectual." He adds that there "never is such a thing as a simple faith; it is always intellectual, and the simplest faith is that for which thought has cleared the issues and got them into order and perspective." The emergence of a creed was an entirely natural part of the Christian program. It is an effort to state the Christian Faith in reasonable terms and in logical order. If a faith is to appeal to the intellect of man, it must welcome this opportunity.

In this case also observers will surely protest that there is no such thing as "a creed," but only a series of creeds, differing greatly, sometimes even denying one another. And, indeed, they do differ greatly in length and thoroughness, some of them stating merely the series of facts which marked the birth of the Faith, some of them going elaborately into the philosophy of the Faith. Attitudes toward them differ greatly also. Some adherents think of their creed as being identical with the Christian Faith, in one or two instances declaring that one must believe this or not be a Christian at all. But all observers will agree that this is an unusual attitude and that adherents of differing creeds yet recognize the Christian character of adherents of other creeds. The differences of the creeds are for the most part frankly recognized to lie within the circle of Christian agreements. Christians who differ from each other are yet nearer to each other than either group is to irreligious men. The transfer of one's allegiance from one Christian Church or creed to another does not mean a transfer of religious allegiance. There is no Anglican religion over against a Presbyterian religion, nor a Calvinist religion over against a non-Calvinist one. They are all aspects of the one Christian religion. When, therefore, the Christian Faith is presented to new groups of hearers by different branches of the Christian Church, it is not several faiths that are being presented; it is the one Christian Faith in its various modes of expression.

1. Most of the creeds of the Christian Faith have grown out of conflict within the Church, conflict regarding some central issue which had become important because for the time it had been questioned or denied. Stagnant bodies have no trouble with their creeds. Indifferent men sometimes think themselves tolerant, whereas they are merely careless of other men's opinions. But when something vital is involved there will always be earnest men who

will take it seriously. They will be the leaders, and there will gather to their standards large bodies of men less informed, less intelligent, who will magnify the issue beyond its true proportions, demanding repression, and the result will be new declarations of faith in new creeds or in rigid reassertion of older creeds. Then, if the spirit of Christian love be restricted or forgotten, the creed becomes a club for the beating of others instead of a staff on which others may lean in the hard path. It is not the existence of differing creeds that troubles the Christian believer; it is the failure of the Christian spirit.

Even at the cost of such failure the Christian Faith must continue its appeal to the intellect. An eminent British philosopher has said: "I know nothing better than to be engaged and immersed in the process of trying to know spiritual truths and of acting upon them." The outcome of this process among Christian believers is the declaration of their findings for the sake of other men and for their own strengthening. The Christian Faith offers a philosophy of life and a truth which will cover the entire range of the spirit; it points out a way of living that is good for the young and the old, for men of all types of mind. What is more natural than that certain phases of it should seem most vital to some, and certain other phases to others? But since the Christian Faith is the foundation of a new brotherhood, it may be clearly demanded that all creeds should be held subject to that spirit of love which helps earnest men to understand each other.

2. It is to be noted that creeds have two main functions, each of which is important. They serve, first, as a declaration to the world of the Faith to which Christians have committed themselves; secondly, as a bond of union among believers. In each case a creed may be expected to express the fullness of the Faith rather than its more primary

aspects. Much as some of us regard some of the creeds, we cannot consider any of them perfect for these functions. It is fair that the world should ask what this Christian Faith is to which Christian adherents invite it. The tendency of different groups will be to include in the statement all that seems to them important. This may include what other equally earnest Christian adherents have not found essential to their Christian lives. If, however, it is understood that any large creed of the Christian Faith is a description of what the Faith comes to when it is carried out to its logical conclusions or expressed in its fullest forms, with abundant provision for other conclusions to be reached by accenting other phases of it, then the creeds will have large value to any earnest seeker after the truth of Christianity. So long as they are taken as ultimate, idealized expressions, not proposed as requisite for the Christian profession, they serve an excellent purpose. It must always be kept in mind, however, that the real essence of Christianity is not to be determined by its differing creeds, but is to be found rather in its accepted Book, and especially in its central Figure.

3. Here also is to be said earnestly that with the progress of the Christian Faith in new lands and the forming of new constituencies there must come new creedal declarations. The old human creeds are not to bind the newer groups who did not frame them and have not known their history in their own lives. To be sure, it cannot be unimportant that earlier Christian adherents have found these declarations of their belief helpful or even essential, and newer believers cannot be indifferent to them. Many of them are not the expression of any one race or racial group but have met the needs of men of varied types and kinds. They will have rich value for new groups or new believers. But as the Church in all its history has claimed the liberty of forming new expressions of faith, so the

newer churches must claim their liberty, and they will find their claim sustained by their brethren who have enjoyed the same liberty in their own lands. The new creeds are inevitable as were the old ones. It is still requisite for any group of earnest men to announce to the world what it is that they hold most precious and what it is they offer to the world for its adherence. It is still necessary that any group of men formed for the gaining of a great purpose should have a bond of union which shall give them a sense of unity and cohesion. Such a testimony and such a bond may not be explicitly stated in terms of a creed, but it will exist implicitly, at least, and thoughtful men will find themselves writing it out from time to time. The Christian group are meant to be different from men outside it, holding certain great realities which the others do not yet hold, committed to certain great programs which are not yet the major interest of other men, trusting some great forces whose power the world does not yet feel. All this will be worded for testimony and for unity at different times. This is the essence of a creed.

The new creeds which will be formed in these days will lay less stress on matters which are personal between the believer and God, less stress on philosophical aspects of the Faith which are vital to only a certain class of adherents, less stress on inferential matters which may grow logically out of the central realities. They will emphasize the central realities themselves and lay added stress on the practical duties common to all believers. Creeds cannot be made up of mere commonplaces, the things that everybody takes for granted. They are sure to express deep convictions which earnest men have reached after struggle of spirit. Only such convictions can inspire to permanent activity. No man ever goes on doing a difficult thing through hardship and danger unless he is driven by some

great conviction which is so rooted in his life that it is not dislodged by hardship and danger. The progress of Christianity has not been brought about merely by genial good will and tolerant indifference to opinions. It is the result, instead, of the outworking of convictions that were the despair of enemies of the Faith. In every creed that is worth while there are possibilities of division and separation. These possibilities need never be realized and the creed may be a bond of wide union instead. But the possibilities will always remain, and there may appear groups of men who will refuse to stand with those who hold the creed. The newer Christian groups have no magic whereby they can avoid the same possibility in declaring their faith. If they call the rest of their nations to accept the Christian Faith, they must make the meaning of that Faith clear to the nations. If they become a mighty working force it must be because they have certain deep agreements which hold them together in the midst of their differences. And if they find themselves differing among themselves, and if they constitute different groups within their own numbers, they need not do it in anger nor opposition. They can do it in love, if they will, and as proof of that freedom of spirit which their faith guarantees. What they ought to learn from other experiences is that creeds for exclusion instead of inclusion are creeds of sadness and not of joy in the Christian heart. And when movements for union of separated groups are sought, let them be on the principle of widest inclusion rather than of narrowest inclusion. The hope of a true creed is to state the truth of Christ so richly and widely that as many as possible may assent to it. This will not be accomplished by stating as little as possible, but by including as much as possible of all those rich experiences which have made up the lives of believers. The creed need not be over long, but it must be rich and com-

prehensive if it is to draw believers together and if it is to bear right witness to the world about.

III

A third historical expression of the Christian conviction appears in its movement of expansion, an expansion which has been both extensive and intensive.

1. The Founder of the Faith lived all his active life within a very small geographical area in what now seems quite an obscure part of the world. In his day much of the most influential portion of the world was either not known at all or but dimly realized. His home was in a province of the Roman Empire, however, and the streams of Greek thought and culture flowed through it, though there is but little evidence of such influence upon him. Here, though he seemed so walled about, he was never roofed over. From the first he thought in wide terms. Many of his fellow countrymen thought of him as a patriotic figure set to restore a national independence which they had lost centuries before. None of his work was done under any such limited program. There is an account preserved of a serious period of temptation through which he passed, in which one temptation was to adopt a short method of gaining power over all the kingdoms of the world. He refused the method but the purpose itself was always in his mind and heart. He took to himself a small group of disciples whom he could train until they caught his true meaning both in his person and in his teaching, breaking down their narrow racial prejudices by parables and example as well as by direct teaching. He taught them that the field of their harvest would be the world with all its complications and difficulties. Before he withdrew from their physical sight he commanded them to become witnesses to him in the uttermost parts of the earth.

All the first group were Jews, but this command involved the expansion of the Faith to include other races. Its first triumph appears in the fact that it was one of his most bigoted Jewish followers who actually led the way to the reception of non-Jews into the group of believers. It required some years for the whole body to see the logic of this expansion. However, the outward movement began very early in the history and the Faith was carried by enthusiastic adherents in all directions from the province in which it began. It rapidly surpassed all racial limitations, adopting other languages and putting its sacred Book into those languages with entire freedom. Organized groups of believers soon appeared in all available lands, varying widely in many lines but in union around the idea of a divine Lord and Redeemer. This expansion brought its own problems and difficulties but it was in itself exactly according to the commandment of the Founder of the Faith. The principal leaders in this remarkable expansion are still the heroes of the Christian Faith.

In these earlier days there was no question in any Christian mind of the purpose of Christ that his religion should become a world-wide fact. After a few centuries, however, two influences unhappily checked the full tide of aggression. For one thing, the Faith became identified with temporal or political power, which has always been to its disadvantage. For another thing, it became deeply concerned with internal development, especially in the refinement of doctrines. This latter concern is always essential, but it is not incompatible with aggressive expansion. *(a)* Identification of the Christian Faith with political organization was perfectly natural but was also hazardous and hurtful. It is inevitable that a religion which intends to cover the whole of the life shall have its influence on government. No man can be a Christian in part

of his life and a non-Christian in the rest of it. He cannot be a Christian when he prays and something else when he votes or occupies a political office. Moreover, the tendency of the Faith to form a compact brotherhood whose members are loyal to each other and who think very much the same thing soon made the Church a power which temporal rulers wanted to use. In so far, there was no harm done. But when the Church, a spiritual institution, became an ally of the temporal power, either seeking to gain its own ends through using that power or allowing itself to be used by the temporal power for the gaining of its ends, it lost its true freedom. We shall see in the closing lecture that a serious problem still exists for earnest believers in all lands at this point. Certainly in the earliest days, while the alliance of Church and State indicated the remarkable progress of the Church, it also helped to weaken any spiritual appeal. The Church began to think in terms of world conquest by sweeping efforts of force rather than the victories of love and personal example. Until now Christians had simply lived their way into power. Now they thought to fight their way to it. Always there were adventurous souls with the old enthusiasm for expansion by spiritual appeal, but the rank and file of the Church lost the early spirit. Remnants of that connection between Church and State are still to be found, but it is steadily being relaxed. The connection between these two agencies of God's will is not to be organic but spiritual. Each is an aid to the other; neither is to control the other.

(b) Meanwhile, in those early days there arose serious difficulties of organization and creed which diverted energy from expansion to discussion. There need be no conflict between the two interests, but ordinarily it occurs in any faith. Periods of creedal debate are seldom periods of rapid expansion. A story is told of a small steam-

boat which plied on an American river, whose boilers had capacity for steam enough either to turn the wheel or to blow the whistle, but not enough for both. Whenever the steamboat was moving it could not blow its whistle; whenever it blew the whistle, the wheel had to stop. There are adherents of all religions who have mental and spiritual capacity to discuss their faith or to live by it, but not enough to do both. When a discussion starts, activity in behalf of their faith seems to cease; so long as they are active in its behalf, they are not concerned for debatable matters. And, of course, it is not so much debated convictions as accepted ones that drive men to peril and labor in the spread of their faith. The truth with which the intellect is struggling is generally felt feebly by the will. It was so in Christian history. We have already noted that the Christian Faith is one of liberty and not of force. It does not preclude corruptions among its adherents, though it furnishes a constant standard of correction in its central and founding Figure. Corruptions did appear and their correction cost time and thought and energy. Many believers think they would have been more readily and soundly corrected if the impulse to expansion had remained strong and dominant, but it was not the central concern of the Church at the period of which we are thinking.

It would not be fair to the facts to question that the course of this expansion in the early centuries was one of rich blessing to the people whom it reached. The Faith of Christ brought new conceptions of all vital matters to men—new conceptions of God, of man, of human relationships, of duty, of society, of destiny. It attacked and destroyed evil customs that were hoary with age, and it established conditions which elevated childhood and womanhood and all racial values. It would be ungracious in criticizing the movement for what it did not do to

overlook the amazing things it did do. The only effective standard by which Christian history can be criticized for its failures is Christianity itself. The criticism merely says that if the history had been truly and fully Christian, the case would have been different. The stream of life which the Christian Faith carried in its expansion in the early days was one which brought life to desert places and hope to depressed lives everywhere. Indeed, some of the most beneficent influences of modern life were born in the very period when expansion had been greatly reduced in the interest of internal development. They were the days of the founding of great universities and of social relationships which were the fountain of the democratic movement. To use an earlier figure, the stream was gathering volume for a new overflowing of its banks.

This overflowing came during the closing period of the eighteenth century and has increased to this day. What is now known as the missionary enterprise is merely the reassertion of the world-wide meaning of the Christian Faith. It is the declaration of this present generation of Christian adherents that their earliest predecessors were right in their interpretation of the clear message of the Founder of the Faith. Christ meant his religion to become a world-wide fact, and the only people who can make it world-wide are those to whom it is already a very real personal fact.

The two hindering conditions just described are not much in evidence to-day, though they are not entirely removed. Doctrinal discussions are still carried on and in limited circles they are allowed to hinder the movement for expansion, but in the main body of the Christian Church they are maintained with mutual understanding and love and without checking the effort to expand the Christian movement to the whole world. Alliance between Church and State does not exist for most of the

Church, and it has become clear that a Christian believer must be loyal to the government under which he lives. In so far as political changes follow the coming of the Christian Faith, they are to be changes with which the governments from which it comes have nothing to do. Every reader of modern history knows how governments have sometimes taken advantage of the expansion of Christianity to gain their own advantage or have persecuted a people because their Faith seemed alien. But no one can study the Christian Faith without realizing that this is not of its genius and without bemoaning the misuse of it in terms of commerce or political advantage. The Christian Faith is not a commercial nor a political agency, though it cannot exist anywhere without having its influence on both commerce and politics. But when it is treated as a means to a political end it is misused and its expansion is sure to be checked.

In the first lecture reference was made to the Christian movement which is now under way around the world. It was then said that most of the opposition to it arises from mistaken judgment regarding its purpose and methods. It is proper here that this movement be described in terms which are acceptable to those who are carrying it on. The Christian movement is merely the voluntary effort of Christian believers to make Jesus Christ known everywhere. It has no connection with governments nor with any political program. When its workers are citizens of a foreign land they have the same rights and privileges as other citizens engaged in other pursuits. The movement itself is under no support of political powers, and many of the citizens of Western lands have no interest in it and give it no support. It is entirely a voluntary matter, both as to the money that is given and the lives that are used. It is less and less a movement carried on by people of one nation for people of another nation and

more and more a movement carried on by the citizens of each land for their own land. Four elements in the Christian movement deserve thoughtful consideration.

(a) It is an effort on the part of Christian believers to fulfill the purpose of the Founder of the Faith. There can be no doubt that Jesus Christ desired that his truth should become universal and that he left it as a sacred trust to his followers to see that it became so. What he had to give to men, of salvation and hope and peace, he meant for all men. If any men needed his cleansing from sin, all men need it; if any men needed the new outlook on life which he gives, all men need it. And he meant it for everybody. (b) The Christian movement is an effort of Christian believers to share with others the best of their own knowledge and experience. For all Christian believers of to-day the Christian religion is a received faith and not an original one. It came to them from others; it seems only fair that it shall pass on from them to others. Christianity is not the indigenous faith of Western nations; it is an acquired faith, coming to them by the effort and sacrifice of men who bore it to them. It is painfully easy to share with others the worst things in a nation—its hard industrial conditions, its dissipations, its temptations to evil, its social inequalities. Surely it is only fair that the best shall also be shared. In the minds of Christian believers their religion is the best thing they have or know. It has brought them a relation to God and other men, and it has a value in their own lives which they know will be helpful also to others. No one requires them to extend their faith on any other grounds but their own appreciation of its value. (c) The Christian movement is an effort on the part of Christian believers to express the nature of the Christian Faith. It is not a Western religion, nor an Eastern one, but a human religion because it contains God's message

to men as men. If Christianity claims to be a world religion, it cannot hope to come to its full expression except in the entire circle of humanity. The central principle of the religion is love, and true love does not stop until the circumference of its power is reached. The love which Christ demands of his followers leaves out no member of the human race. If the religion of Christ is to be expressed in its true nature, nothing less than a world movement is possible. (d) The Christian movement is an effort to help in unifying the world. Many causes of disunity have issued from Christian lands, ambition, pride, greed, selfishness. But the genius of the Christian Faith calls for unity. There is but one God, one human race, one Savior from sin in whom God has been incarnate —there is nothing fundamental which does not suggest unity. Something must make the world friendly instead of antagonistic. Christian adherents consider the spirit and purpose of Jesus Christ exactly suited to accomplishing so great a result. This is the dominating motive with many of its strongest advocates.

Such a movement has to be carried on in the world as it is, with many complications, many varieties of agents, many possibilities of misunderstanding. It is liable at all times to the old hindrances, but increasingly it is freed from them. Under these better conceptions and with this larger freedom, the modern expansion of the Christian Faith has been far more rapid and thorough than the earlier one. It began its new career in India in 1793, in China in 1807, in Japan in 1859, and to-day there are only very small portions of the earth where it has not begun to be known. In the past century the knowledge of Christ has reached more people than in any other century of its history. Its sacred Book has been cast into more tongues of men than in any other similar period; it has to-day a larger staff of eager men and women en-

gaged in the work of its expansion than ever before: it has more established institutions of expansion than in any era of its life, and the purpose to offer it to all men is more pervasive than ever before in the Christian Church. By this time, happily, it is clearly understood that the only methods for its expansion are spiritual ones. The use of force or of other inducements than those suited to religion would be resented as quickly by Christian believers as by adherents of the displaced faith. In the new era of expansion in which we live, the Christian Faith offers itself to the world peacefully and intelligently. Its adherents believe that it has what the world needs. Only so do they offer it to the world.

2. Thus far we have considered the extensive expansion of the Christian Faith. In our own day there has occurred an intensive expansion which bids fair to make a new era in the history of the religion. It is the renewed discovery of the universal application of the Faith to all the concerns of life. This will be the chief concern of the closing lecture. In the earliest period, when the extensive or geographical expansion was progressing so rapidly, it seems to have swallowed up the energy of believers, but as soon as power developed it began to be used for the correction of evils in all phases of human life. This zeal waned, however, along with the zeal for expansion, and evils were allowed to exist in society and human relationships which were utterly incompatible with any clear understanding of the Christian Faith. At first the little company of believers were helpless against the government and the social system. There was good excuse then for treating their Faith as a means for rescue of troubled individuals from conditions which could not be corrected. Christian thinkers now see that the power to correct evils constitutes a duty to correct them. A helpless group might not find a way to overcome wrongs and

to set men free from social evils and injustice, but Christians are not such a group in these days. They have become a strong, forceful body of men and women, with immense social power. There is no evil of which they have reason to stand in awe. They endured slavery, some even finding it entrenched in the natural order of things, some finding support for it in the teaching of the sacred Book, but little by little it was seen to be utterly incompatible with the spirit of Christ, and to-day it cannot live with any intelligent understanding of that spirit. Gambling is a similar vice which must as surely be banished. War must go the same course soon or late. Traffic in strong drink is now going toward its ruin. The religion of Christ is becoming clearly a religion for all men and for the whole life of each man. As it develops strength in its own believers it makes them burden bearers for weaker peoples everywhere.

This intensive expansion makes its extensive expansion immensely more difficult, but also immensely more worth while. The leaders in its geographical expansion will come first of all from the places where it now exists, though their work will be taken over more and more by the men who are won to Christ in each land. It is not in the thought of the churches in Christian lands that their workers will carry the word of the Christian Faith throughout all lands. This is the work of the men who know those lands best. The work of Christian believers from outside of any land is simply to start a movement which later they may help to the fullest of their ability but which will become as speedily as possible the movement of the believers of each land. What are often called "foreign" missionaries are to be replaced in leadership by those who are not "foreign" to the land in which the Christian movement for expansion is under way. The "foreign" group may remain as helpers and supporters, but

the weight of the movement must always fall on citizens of each land before it becomes mighty.

In the same way this social or intensive expansion of the Faith, its application to the whole of the life of the community will be the task of those believers who have found the help of the Faith in their own lives. They will know what customs need to be changed—they and not strangers from other lands. They will know how those changes should be brought about—they and not men unaccustomed to the land.

But nothing now can hinder the expansion of the Christian Faith, nothing but failure of Christian adherents themselves in more and less Christian lands. In all these lands the Church has had its beginning. In them all the great declarations of faith have been made or can easily be made. In them all the Faith is ready to spread to the last man and to the last need of each man. Every land needs what Jesus Christ has to offer of salvation and hope and new life. He offers it through those who have already received it. Some of them have failed him in the past, but always some have proved trustworthy. Their number was never so great as to-day.

CHAPTER VIII

The Christian Conviction and the World

We have thus far considered three of the great interests of religion, discussing the teaching of the Christian Faith regarding God, regarding man and regarding the relation between man and God, especially as this relation involves the fact of sin and the method of salvation. In the preceding lecture we began the consideration of the Christian conviction regarding the fourth point of religious concern, the relation between man and man. At the time we observed the provision for a close relation among believers in the brotherhood of the Christian Church. The present lecture is concerned with the relation which the Christian Faith seeks to establish among men everywhere.

I

No thoughtful man can observe the world as it actually exists without profound dissatisfaction. The evils of the social order are so prevalent that they arrest attention everywhere. It is not suggested that all is evil. There are in all social orders many good traits, as there are everywhere excellent human characteristics. Many relationships are beautiful and are worthy of humanity. Nothing is gained and much is lost in the habit of denouncing humanity and social conditions in a wholesale way. The Christian Faith does not sustain a pessimistic view of the world. Indeed, it is these desirable things that set

the evils of the world in sharp and painful outline against the sky. And the dissatisfaction of Christian believers is deepened by three elements in their religion.

(a) The world in which these evils exist is God's world. Its forces are benevolent. It is meant to be the home of a human brotherhood for which it is well adapted. One of the marked traits of Christ was his joy in the natural world. He loved flowers and grain and birds and harvests, sunshine and rain. He loved people more and was with them almost constantly. He taught them that God is a loving Father who cares for men more devotedly than He cares for the natural order. That such a scene should be turned into a field of conflict among men, that one group should exploit another in such a world, that part of the human race should be miserable or depressed or abused—such conditions are intolerable. If this were the devil's world, or if its mastery were problematical, there might be some excuse for the inhumanity of man to man and for the failure of social relationships. But the human race is set in the midst of a world which God made and maintains and which he is guiding toward some worthy end. The Christian Faith makes social and other evils all the more impossible.

(b) Christian believers are not allowed to withdraw from the world and its activities. They are adjured by their Master to be salt and light in their surroundings. This involves their close relationship with society at any point of its need. There is no room for contempt for society nor for abandonment of the social order. Instead, it is clear that no man can absolve himself from his measure of responsibility for the evils in any social order of which he is part. Every man shares in the results of social evils in his own life, no matter how eager he is to exempt himself from them. He cannot be entirely free from the oppressive industrial or economic system of his land,

from the preparation for wars and from their support, from the results of class or caste distinctions. Every life is so interwoven with the social fabric that all that pertains to that fabric influences the life. No man could, if he would, withdraw from the world so effectively that he can exonerate himself from its evils. And the Christian Faith makes it imperative on its believers not to withdraw from the world but to pour into it the best life they have. If it is true that they have what the world has not, it is meant that the world receive it from them.

(c) The dissatisfaction of Christian believers with the present social order at many points is deepened by their realization that all of the evils are both avoidable and correctible. All these evils arise from sin or ignorance, and the Christian religion exists in the world because they are here. They have no necessary place in the human order, they serve no good ends, their destruction would be for the good of humanity everywhere. The Christian Faith cannot take such evils for granted when it carries within itself the corrective answer for any of them. In so far as evils issue from ignorance, there need be no discussion regarding their correction; surely ignorance is unnecessary in the world. And in so far as the evils issue from sin, the Christian Faith cannot admit their necessity, for its distinct mission in the world is the cure of sin.

Christian believers realize that there has been too little serious effort to deal with social and political evils in terms of religion. Sometimes, indeed, the evils have been entrenched in religious practices or have received religious sanctions. In some parts of the world social evils have been accepted as inevitable or as an unavoidable phase of human development. Whole groups of men have taken their own degradation or that of others for granted. It has not been long since many Christian believers doubted the aplication of their religion to economic, social or

international questions. They thought of religion as a purely personal thing. Gradually the realization has grown that if a religion does not cover the whole of life and all of its interests, then it cannot serve any part of the life effectively. Life is one, and efforts to live it in compartments are always doomed to failure. Recent decades have seen a wide expansion of the application of the Christian religion to life. To-day, in the intelligent circles of the Faith, there is no interest of life which is not counted the concern of Christian believers.

It is said that social evils are rooted in human nature and that human nature cannot be changed; Christian believers reply that no evils are necessary to right human nature and that the nature can be changed in any way that is requisite to make it true to itself. Countless instances of such change are available to all observers. Every evil in the social order has already been eradicated from the wills of multitudes of human beings by the power of Christ in their lives. Mean men have become generous, selfish men have been made socially helpful, untrue men have been made reliable, narrow-minded men have been broadened. What has been done can be done again. Christ came to do just this thing—to change men until a new order should appear under his power working through them. He has already made all the changes needed in many men; he can make them in more men. On this account his followers cannot accept the evils of the social order placidly.

II

The evils of the present social order have been much discussed in recent years, and we need not here go into careful details about them. Acknowledging other evils, most of us would agree that five are outstanding. Each is wholly incompatible with what have been pointed out

already as the convictions of the Christian Faith. Each prevents the presence of Christ's Kingdom of God on earth. These five are: *inter-racial animosities, international antagonisms, inter-group jealousies and injustices, war and human depressions such as poverty and degradation.* Each of these has been greatly enhanced by the later condition of the world whereby groups and races and nations have been brought into far closer relations than heretofore. It is no problem to get along with one's neighbor if one never meets or sees him. It is always easy to avoid war if we avoid all contacts. If the scale of living is low for all of us then there are no depressed classes of which we can become conscious or for which we can become concerned. Until there grows in the spirits of men a sense of personal worth and a desire to benefit their own kind, there will be no rebellion against the control of one industrial group by another. Each of these social evils, with all of their attendant and collateral evils, is an outgrowth of the new conditions of the world to which humanity has hardly yet become accustomed. They have all been sharpened in intensity by the recent experiences through which the world has been passing. Moreover, these five major evils are peculiar to no single country. They affect the social order everywhere.

1. No single problem is receiving more persistent and earnest attention in Christian lands at this moment than that of racial relationships. It is no simple problem, and all simple solutions of it are condemned at once by their simplicity. Historical prejudices, physical antagonisms, confirmed habits of life, all help to make it difficult to find the way in which widely differing portions of the human race can assert their independence and their unity at the same time. Color lines are the most easily recognizable lines, but racial differences are not confined to color distinctions. Outbreaks from time to time, exaggerated

in their excitement and even more extreme in their reports, increase the difficulty of right relationship. For all this Christian believers have no defense, though they sometimes differ as to the wisest way of handling the situation. Against it every substantial principle of the Christian Faith is in irreconcilable conflict. God has made of one blood all races of men. The human races are one human race, all made in the image of the one God, all under obligation to find and execute the will of that one God. There are differences between racial groups, and it is the duty of every group to come to its best development for the contribution it can make to the whole race. But permanent and necessary antagonisms between them are out of the question. There must be somewhere a cure for such an evil. For the Christian Faith the cure lies in the application of the principle of love by which Christ meant to make a brotherhood of the scattered races of men. Christians accept the condemnation pronounced upon them by observers for their failure here, but they remind their critics that in this condemnation they are being judged by the standards of their own religion. It is because they have not been true to their own Christian Faith that they have failed. They have a growing sense of that failure and an increasing resolve to correct it. It is their Faith and not themselves which Christian adherents offer to the world. But the Christian principle of love utterly forbids that any group shall hold another in contempt or shall rise by the suppression of another. The children of one Father must learn to be brotherly among themselves. Christ has not made us masters and servants but brothers under one Father. We have a long and perhaps a hard road to travel before we realize this plain Christian principle in conduct, but we have the joy of realizing that we are on the right road toward a true goal of human relationships.

2. Other elements enter into the discussion when we consider international antagonisms. It is natural that in recent centuries the most nearly Christian nations have been the most aggressive ones in all international relationships. They have sometimes wrought injustice and damage, but the influences which issue from the Christian lands have not been chiefly or predominantly evil. Chiefly they have been for good in other nations. Their education, their social ministries, their industrial opportunities, their economic developments, have brought rich good. There is always danger of singling out the adverse elements in any relationship and magnifying them until they seem the only elements.

All nations are now the victims of history and of ideals which have not yet been corrected by the wider vision of thoughtful minds. Heretofore most nations have thought solely of their own people and their advantage. They have been on the defensive for their own interests. Christian nations have shared this spirit in large part because they have failed to apply the Christian principles of love and sacrifice to any relations above the individual life. The result has been already suggested, namely, three types of patriotism have developed. First, there has been a patriotism of self-defense, each nation seeking to grow strong for the sake of protecting itself from other nations. National leaders have urged armaments and military equipment in order that the nation might continue in the midst of aggressive nations which would covet its lands and resources. Secondly, there has been patriotism for self-expression. National leaders have urged the right of each nation to be itself and to be left alone by other nations so that it may express its inner spirit in its own way. This has led to rejection of the industries and social customs of other nations and to a spirit of animosity which would gladly drive all other peoples out of the

nation's borders. The Christian people of America a few years ago were compelled to meet and oppose a strong propaganda of this sort under the familiar heading of "America for the Americans." Every nation knows this spirit. Thirdly, there has been patriotism for aggression. An inflated sense of national importance leads patriots to lay plans for the conquest of other nations and the acquiring of their territory and resources. It was fear of this type of patriotism that led to the latest war. The feeling of Germany that it was being crowded into the shade and must somehow procure a place in the sun had developed in many German minds a set purpose to occupy a major place in the sun.

All these types of patriotism are perfectly familiar to students of history. In the beginning of each of them there was real merit, and the patriotic spirit developed in each case doubtless is open to praise. The new spirit will not belie the value of either of these types. For the fourth type of patriotism will be for service, and this will be according to the Christian principle. It will not be a wholly new thing. Many nations have hints of it in the midst of their patriotism of other types. When we put internationalism above mere patriotism it is this which we are trying to say. We do not minimize the value and beauty of patriotism. That has been bought at too dear a price to be lightly set aside. We merely seek to redirect it into wider and nobler channels. We would have each nation grow strong within itself, we would have its security guaranteed, we would have its peculiar spirit maintained without destructive influences from other lands, but all because the world as a whole will be best served thereby. As Christians we believe that the race is one and that God means each part of it to contribute its share of good to the whole. This cannot be done by the subjugation of one nation by any other. There may

have been a time in history when such subjugation had its value and was an advance over receding conditions, but that time is certainly past.

Thoughtful men know that some nations are superior to others in present ability and equipment for national life. Such superiority constitutes a real opportunity which may take either of two forms. It may become an opportunity for self-aggrandizement by the exploitation of less favored nations; this has been the result in many instances. Cynical men insist that it is the only opportunity which nations can ever be expected to see, since group mankind is sure to be selfish. To this Christians can never agree, for themselves or for others. They see the other and richer opportunity which superiority provides: that of service and helpfulness. An early Christian writer phrased it in this way: "Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves." Any strong nation may use its energies for its own advantage, but it has a mighty opportunity to use its energies for the upholding and steadying of weaker nations. There are many who count this a mere chimera, a dream of idealists which can never be converted into reality. But the principle involved is in constant operation in personal life and even in communal life. Once it was counted a mere dream there also, and there are still men who assert the fundamental selfishness of humanity and insist on finding something selfish in what we call unselfishness. It must be said, then, that the appearance of unselfishness, if that were all of it, has been to the immense advantage of men. But the appearance can never take the place of the reality of unselfishness. The matter is easily tested. When an apparently unselfish deed is performed, all men praise it so long as they believe it was really unselfish. But if they should learn that it was only apparently so, that the doer had in his mind all the time his own ad-

vantage, best gained by seeming to think of others, they would no longer praise it. They would consider themselves deceived and wronged. Whenever a nation does what looks to be an unselfish act, it is always applauded by any who believe in unselfishness, and is always suspected by those who do not believe in such impulses in national life. But if it should develop that the act was not unselfish but was wholly for national advantage, the nation would at once lose the high honor it had gained. There is no adequate reason why nations may not be expected to follow the same principle of unselfishness which is proposed by the Christian Faith to the individual. Certainly its application makes for true happiness in personal life. Christians believe it will make for true happiness in international life.

The application of the principle of unselfishness among nations will always be more difficult than among individuals. The duties of trusteeship enter into national relationships as they may not do among individuals, but the joy that all men find in the beginnings of this new patriotism is only an earnest of the deeper happiness that awaits the world when it comes into full operation. Meanwhile, there is need for patience as the older patriotism continues to assert itself and as nations seek to preserve what was good in its earliest types. It will be necessary to protect nations and racial groups against each other, and this may be clumsily done. Even in loving families it is sometimes necessary to prevent small hands from seizing upon the possessions of other members of the household, and sometimes this is badly done so that the small hands are hurt and feelings are outraged, but later years may bring cure to the injured feelings and perhaps teach older members of the family to do similar things in a better way. The next few decades will demand all the human patience of which men are capable

in the new adjustments that must be made in international relationships. This has become suddenly a new world, a world of close relationships, a world of mutual obligations, a world of limited rights. The nations are like children in their first confinement in a school with other scholars after a wild free life in which there was no one to limit their independence. Such children are sure to do violent things which carry over their old selfishness into the new social conditions. They are better reasoned with than resented. In this new world nations must learn to sit down together and have things out. In opening an important international conference, a British statesman said, "I hope this conference will be a great example of how men of good will even if divided slightly by interests can, by putting their good will first, prove to the world and their own countries that they can be good friends of peace without sacrificing any of the vital interests of the nations to which they long." The Christian Faith carries a strong assurance that such a way can be found. Nations can live in righteous peace and brotherly love.

3. In the matter of inter-group jealousies and injustices, the Christian principle is equally clear. As human society now exists, social groups have their natural place and function. There have been many schemes for their elimination, but thus far none has been found practicable. Experiments have resulted in the mere alteration of relationship between existing groups or the establishing of a new series of groups. The mind naturally turns to the great Russian experiment. Those who have not been in Russia are confused by the conflicting reports of equally honest men. But one fact is quite plain: that one governing group has been displaced by another governing group. The new one may be better, larger, more logical, than the previous one, but it is nothing but a group after

all, and it is just as irresponsible except to its own members as was the previous one. No experiment has been able to dispense with social groups. It is not yet proved that such groups need to disappear. Just as there is nothing inherently inhuman or wrong in the existence of nations and racial groups, so there seems nothing inherently objectionable in the existence of groups of laborers and employers or directors of labor, of teachers and students, of mental workers and hand workers, and similar working distinctions. And there is apt to grow up in all such cases a certain group consciousness which tends to integrate the group within itself. In the past this group consciousness has needed to be largely on the defensive. Weaker and less crystallized groups have suffered constant injustice at the hands of stronger and more self-conscious groups. The history of laboring groups in all lands has been shot through with injustice and disregard of employing groups. It is supposed by some that this antagonism is inevitable. A well-known labor leader in America has declared that of course laborers and employers will always oppose each other, because each group naturally wants all the advantage for itself. Well, let it be said that such an idea is thoroughly and radically unchristian and that the Christian Faith would fail in the world if it were true. And it is not true. It is possible for any individual to think in terms of his group, as multitudes of labor leaders and employers do in behalf of their own groups. If that is possible with regard to a smaller group it is possible with regard to the social group of which these smaller ones are only parts. Any sincere labor leader will insist for himself that he is forgetting his own personal interests when they conflict with the group interests which have been committed to him. He finds his own interests best served when he serves the interests of the whole. And that is the Christian principle. But if it applies in his

own case, there is no reason why it should not apply in the case of his group and its relation to the interests of the whole of which it is only a part. It is when individuals think of themselves as wholes and not as parts that mischief is wrought in society. It is when groups think of themselves as wholes instead of parts that still wider mischief is wrought. The Christian principle requires us to think of wholes, finding ourselves and our groups part of a total brotherhood in which the interests of all are the concern of each, and the concern of each is the interest of all. Cynical men count this a counsel of perfection, but it is a commonplace of personal life and it is the Christian principle for the world and all its groups.

4. The growing opposition to war is nowhere more marked than in Christian lands. In some non-Christian lands the Christian Faith is thought of as inseparably connected with blood-shedding and warfare. This is frankly accepted as the failure in large part of Christian adherents. It is no failure of Christianity. What was said in an earlier lecture regarding the intensive expansion of the religion may be pleaded here. Whatever has been the usage of the past, it is only now that multitudes of men are seeing the utter incompatibility between modern war and intelligent Christianity. It is possible that war once was a social advance. It may once have been waged for ends for which humanity had not then found wiser methods. Condemnation of war to-day need not carry with it an assertion that it has never served any good end. But as things are now, as the world has come to be, as men are now related, it is utterly indefensible to take war any longer for granted. If ever there was need for it, that need ought to be past. Any thorough knowledge of the fair implications of the situation reveals that war and Christianity are not feasible in the same world. The argument may be rested on social bases, or economical

arguments, or logical implications, or anywhere else, but for the Christian Faith it rests on the contradiction which war suggests between the spirit of Christ and itself. This is no way to settle disputes between rational men. The very fact that disputes are allowed to reach the stage where men think of using forceful and brutal methods of adjustment is itself an indictment of civilization. Men do not fight until pent-up feelings have been allowed to develop into passion. The way to prevent war is to stop the occasions of war. "The time to end war is fifty years before it begins." If earnest men of all nations are really and deeply fraternal and Christian, war need not come upon the horizon at all.

Let it not be forgotten, however, that it is exactly by the principles of the Christian Faith that war is most severely condemned. Observers are demanding of Christians: "How can you reconcile the teaching of your religion with preparations for war and the adoption of war policies and attitudes?" The reply is that they cannot do it at all in this modern day, and that, therefore, it is they who are to blame and not the Faith. And again it is not Christian believers but the Christian Faith which is offered to the world. They would have the world take the Faith and lead or aid in an honest effort to apply it to all of life. Meanwhile, in Christian lands the movement to end war and to find worthier ways of dealing with human disputes is gaining in strength.

5. In the matter of human depressions, such as poverty and degradation, the Christian Faith takes a further definite stand. Such conditions have no justification in a rational and rightly ordered human society.

(a) If the cause of depression lies in the broken or incapable spirit of men, then society must find ways of changing that spirit and of putting a new and ambitious life into men. This is happening in many instances, and

can happen in more. No wise educator takes a defective spirit as a finality. Indolence can be cured. Lack of ambition can be corrected. When poverty and depression are voluntary they constitute a social and personal problem to which society must set itself. Only a cynical disbelief in the possibilities of human nature can justify accepting depression as essential to certain types of men. These types have larger capacities than have been developed. When families are poor and unprovided by their own choice, then it is their choice that must become an object of concern for the social order. And this will be precisely according to the Christian idea, which rests on unquestioning faith in the value of each individual and in his possibilities of character and social service.

(*b*) But some depression is involuntary. In some lands it is woven into the very fabric of prevailing social and religious systems that some men are favored above others and that there is no escape from that condition. With this idea the Christian Faith can have nothing in common. In the practice of Christian lands social distinctions are never irretrievable. In these lands it is possible to pass from one social group to another without offending any social or religious order. The "lower" social classes often furnish the national leaders, while members of the "higher" classes may by their own misdeeds lose their place and become members of far lower groups. This of itself constitutes a social and religious problem. But the way is clear for the solution of it, under Christian influence. No highways are closed to men of any group by any religious obstacle. But it is involuntary and socially forced poverty and depression that brings the largest indictment on civilization. Such depression has been taken for granted, but it can no longer be assumed. There is enough for all, or enough could be secured for all. Poverty is wholly unnecessary in the

world as it is. There need be no flat level on which all men live. There may be differences, since some may make more and some less of their opportunities and possessions, but there is no reason why any part of the community should be required to live below the proper level of human life in a world where the resources of life can be controlled.

This ideal of the Christian Faith calls for closer international relations so that the resources of the world may become available for all parts of the world. Some nations have less than they need for the care of their depressed classes, but other nations lying close beside them are sure to have what is needed. The problem becomes one of exchange and partnership, a problem which can be worked out more fairly in the spirit of human brotherhood than in any other way. This is the proposal of the Christian Faith.

III

Over against these five major evils and all their collateral and consequent evils, the Christian Faith proposes two ideals. (a) For the individual it offers the ideal of the character and spirit of Jesus Christ himself. He is the normative man, by whom all men are to test themselves and to be tested. He is at once the despair and hope of his followers. He is equally the despair and hope of the world. The solution of the world's problem, so far as it lies in personal relationships, lies in the producing of men of the type and character of Christ. Such men are not impossible. In so far as they have yet been developed they have been the men whom every straining situation has needed. (b) For the social order the Christian Faith offers the ideal of The Kingdom of God, of which the Founder of the Faith constantly spoke. It is a rich conception, with large content. A Christian philosopher has recently described it as "a spiritual organism, a fellowship

of persons, bound together in coöperative love and forming in union with God the tissue and web of the spiritual World—the eternal Universe." This is not too strong a word. But we can express the central meaning in an accepted phrase: *The Kingdom of God means the rule of God in the hearts and lives of men.* His rule in their *hearts* is personal and must be accepted voluntarily. The power of God controls all things as things, and so far as men are mere things they are constantly under his control. But so far as they are persons, his rule is accepted by them voluntarily if it is established at all. His rule in the *lives* of men is social, determining their relations to each other. His will becomes normative for conduct, as the character of Christ becomes normative for personal character.

This reveals the Christian reply to the question, What is progress? There is manifestly no way of deciding whether we are progressing or losing ground and no way of telling how far we have gotten, unless we know in which direction and where we want to go. The whole subject is under wide discussion, much of it wholly acceptable to Christian thinking because it is really an analysis of the ultimate aims of Christ. The human race progresses as it comes nearer to the acceptance of the rule of God in the hearts and lives of its members. It will be no slavishly uniform experience. It will have in it full play for human diversities, but these diversities will not set some against others. Those who are seeking to serve the same will may not struggle against each other.

The establishing of this Kingdom of God in the world will produce a social order with three characteristics: First, it will be marked by righteousness. Christ once commanded his followers to put first in their concern the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, seeing everything else as a mere addition to life. The Kingdom of God is

inseparable from righteousness. Thoughtful men may discuss the proximate standard of right, but for the Christian Faith the ultimate standard of right, which measures all proximate standards, is the will of God, itself the expression of his nature and character. What a moral being ought to do in a given emergency may be debated, but the only debate will be on details. If man could find on any matter the mind of God as the center and power of the moral order, that would be his duty. Slowly such an order does develop before earnest men. Men who wish supremely to do right are the hope of the present human order.

Secondly, the Kingdom of God in the world will produce the condition of peace. It will not be the peace of supineness and indifference, nor the peace of force and fear. It will be the peace that issues from righteousness, from assurance that one will both do justly and receive justice. There is no other secure peace. Christ once said that he did not come to send peace but a sword, and the saying has troubled many students of his teaching. The context of the saying shows that he was speaking of the assured effect of his teachings on certain conditions. Truth is always sure to cause differences among men. When a new truth comes in sight, which will disturb accepted opinions, the first thought of some men is to silence it and to prevent disturbance. Christ knew that his followers could not long practice any such silence. What they recognize to be true they must make known, and this will create the disturbance that truth always makes. And yet the outcome of all truth is new progress toward peace. Falsehood is the sure cause of strife. In a sound and Christian social order there will be the peace that comes from glad admission of truth and of human rights.

The third condition produced by the Kingdom of God on earth is that of human joy. God could not have

meant the human race to be miserable, nor to abandon any part of itself to misery. Happiness is the normal condition of childhood, and there is deadly error in any social system whose children are doomed to unhappiness. But Christ said that his followers must become as little children. Whatever else this may mean, it certainly includes the temper of mind that keeps one peaceful and happy. No man can safely make his own happiness an object of direct endeavor, but every man may make the happiness of others one of his chief objects of effort. When it is seen that any condition permanently and inevitably destroys or hinders the happiness of others, it is clear that this condition is not compatible with the full expression of the Kingdom of God. Happiness is not first. Not even peace is first. Righteousness is first. Both happiness and peace come out of conditions of righteousness or they are precariously held. One of the pre-Christian writers said that the fruits of righteousness should be peace, and another wrote that there could be no peace to the wicked. It is useless to offer peace or happiness to men who are morally wrong. Joy could not come in the world of a moral God except as the outcome of a right heart and life.

The Christian Scripture gathers this new social order up in a single phrase: "The Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." It is easy to see how it would stand in contrast with much of the existing social condition of the world to-day. It is equally easy to see how suited it is to true human nature and how certainly human nature would be brought to its best expression in such an order. It blends liberty and fellowship, the liberty of righteousness and the fellowship of peace, with the added joy of right relationship with God and men. Already in their own spirits multitudes of men are finding the reality of this Kingdom, and it is to earn-

est men of this sort that we must look for the realization of it in the world to replace the present social order wherever that order conflicts with the Kingdom of God.

IV

The Kingdom of God is no mere dream of Christian believers. Instead, the Christian Faith has a clear program for approach to its ideals. This Faith does not admit that any evils are inevitable or incorrectible. Nor does it admit that humanity is the subject of a blind evolution which must take its allotted way unchanged and unhastened. As a recent Christian writer has expressed it: "The Christian Faith makes its definite choice between a blind evolutionary struggle and a guided struggle between love and the misused freedom of man." It believes that all these evils lie within the sphere of human freedom. With evolution, as we have said, Christianity has no battle. Many of its warmest defenders are Christian thinkers, who count it the way whereby God has made his world. But with the theory of blind, unguided forces, gaining no end except accidentally, Christianity has a perennial battle. It cannot agree that the movements of the world are toward no end whatever. It utterly denies that the wonderful coördination of forces which has accomplished the marvelous results of the world as we now know it has come about by unguided chance. And when human rationality appeared on the scene, however it came, the forces of progress received a new impulse and a new control. Reason, moral character, responsibility are central ideas for Christian thinking, and it does not admit that men are helpless in presence of blind forces accomplishing they know not what. Rational beings have immense power in the entire order of which they are part, and can bring about what they see ought to be accomplished. It is not hopeless, therefore, but merely rational, to propose

a program for the attainment of the Kingdom of God and the correction of the evils which now injure humanity. In that program there are four items, all easy to state, all difficult to execute.

1. A primary item in the Christian program is the wide developing of a clear faith that all evils can be remedied. Whatever ought to be can be. What larger purpose the world may serve in the plans of God we do not know, but in the world as we now know it the highest manifestation of value is in personal moral beings, and the world must have for part of its rational purpose the serving and consummation of such beings. It can impose no impossible obstacles in their way. There can be nothing essential to human nature which constitutes a barrier to the completion of human nature, unless the universe is hopelessly illogical. Neither in the soul of man nor in the conditions under which he develops can there be, therefore, any essential evils. Those that exist can all be cured.

This faith of the curability of all evils takes three stages, and every recognized evil of the human order passes through these stages. We have already hinted at this (Lecture II), but the process may now be more fully described. *(a)* In the first stage the evil is recognized as regrettable but as a matter of course. Generally it is a condition of such long standing that it is thought to be deeply grounded in human nature or in the order of life. Slavery passed through this stage. It was counted an inevitable accompaniment of human relationship. To be sure, it was the masters who felt most sure about it, just as it is oftenest kings who are sure of the divine right of kings. It is so with poverty to-day. Proposals for the cure of poverty are generally met with sarcasm; the proposer evidently does not know the facts about poverty. Many persons have this same attitude toward

war. "Men always have fought and men always will fight." They think in the same way about corruption in politics; it is regrettable but unescapable. So with intemperance; since early recorded history men have abused liquor in various forms, and presumably they will always do so. Now, so long as any evil is taken as a matter of course there is no hope of correcting it. No one will make any serious effort for the purpose. Instead, some will find ways of justifying it and of showing that objections to it are unreasonable or even impious. For at this stage almost every evil is sure to be supported by the sacred books, Christian or other, which will bear most weight in the argument.

(b) There comes in time, however, another stage, when the evil becomes a problem. Men begin to wonder whether after all it is inevitable. They do not see just how to correct it; they are not even sure that it is correctible, but they have an uneasy feeling that something ought to be done to make it different. This generally results in efforts at regulation, in the hope of ameliorating evil results to some degree. Such a stage is always caused by the appearance of some ideal of life which is interfered with by the evil under discussion. Slavery passed into this stage for Christians when it was realized that it involved the suppression of the personalities of myriads of men who ought to have the full chance to come into likeness to Christ and their fellows. A similar fundamental injury to personality is making war a serious problem. This is not the stage of cure but of debate and unrest. The evil is no longer a matter of course. It no longer has to be accepted without question. Perhaps after all there may be some way of dealing with it, without violating either the integrity of human nature of the purpose of God as expressed in the natural order.

(c) Then comes a third stage, when the evil is seen

to be impossible, no part of the natural order, ruinous instead of essential in the human order. There is then no longer any question about whether its cure ought to be attempted or whether there is any way of curing it. The only question is as to the way in which it shall certainly be cured. This is the stage of methods of correction, trials of this and that, plans to do it in this way and that way. At last the true and successful way is found and humanity sets itself to the cure of the evil. Slavery passed through this stage and was long the ground of earnest and divisive debate. Different groups found different ways of handling the evil, but it has been ended or is on the way to ending in all even nominally Christian lands.

A really intelligent Christian Faith holds this third stage before all thoughtful men. There is no inevitable social evil. It is not necessary for society to surrender to anything that ruins it or its members. The forming of this assurance among men is a primary part of the program of Christianity. A Faith which sets out with an incarnation of the infinite God in Christ as the Master of love could not do without this conviction.

2. A second item in the Christian program for the establishing of the Kingdom of God on earth is the production of increasing numbers of men of good will, men who will yield to the force of goodness and execute the program of love. Nothing can take the place of this production of reconstructed personalities. At the last it is what persons do that brings hope to the world. This is the order of a Personal God and it lies in its nature that personalities are its chief agents. These good men are committed to the program of Christ. They are not merely good, but good-for-something. Their goodness expresses itself forcefully in behalf of their fellows. God has made himself known most powerfully through per-

sonalities whom he has made worthy to be his messengers. And a good man is still the most forceful reality in the moral order. This will explain the normal procedure of Christian expansion. It begins with an appeal to a few men, perhaps to but one man, and proceeds on that basis until it has secured a group of adherents who in turn become winners of other men. At every crisis new groups of such men must be formed, ordinarily around one or two outstanding men who have become unshakably convinced of the great Christian realities. The history of great reformations is the story of great reformers. When Christ was initiating his enterprise, which he intended to become world wide he did not preach a crusade nor start a popular uprising. Indeed, the record tells that he checked more than one such uprising which might have been turned to his personal advantage. Instead, he was devoting himself to the forming of a small group of men who would understand his program and himself. With a body of good men, soundly and solidly won to his enterprise, he could safely trust it in their care. This is the only wise program of Christianity, adopted in all its successful movements. In every nation the primary need is for men who are good, good-for-something, good for the sake of their fellows, good with the goodness of God in Christ. The production of such men is the second essential step in the program of the Christian Faith.

3. A third item in the program for bringing the Kingdom of God upon earth is the developing of the keenest intelligence in these men of good will. Goodness by itself is not enough. Sometimes grave harm is done by men who are good but unintelligent. The mere acceptance of a principle of life or of government or of progress does not insure the right application of it. There must be also careful study both of the meaning of the principle involved and of the conditions to which it is to be applied.

This is the explanation of the strong insistence of historic Christianity on education in all its branches. Even in those dark ages of which we were speaking in a former lecture, it was the Christian Church which kept all the learning there was in Europe. In later days, the school and the Church have been close allies, the school receiving its earlier forms and much of its continued support from the Church. But the Christian Faith is concerned with all education that may be given under any auspices. The more men know about the world of God, the better prepared they are to master the future and to present to God the world which he purposes them to make. Religion is at its best when it is most intelligent, and whoever opposes the advance of truth in any field whatever is a mistaken advocate of the Christian Faith. Nor does any Christian consciously make any such opposition.

But Christianity considers the development of good will essential to true education. An educated man is a peril to the world if he is not a good man. The knowledge of chemistry and its poisons is a blessing in the right kind of minds, but it is a grave curse when evil men receive it. It is not proved, indeed it is disproved, that education in itself increases human happiness and virtue. Has not every nation been betrayed at times by its ablest men? Has not every educator seen some of his ablest pupils fail utterly in the moral life? The establishing of schools is a national necessity, but it is not a finality. Much will depend on what is taught in the schools and whether character is formed. Education sharpens the tool, but there are forms of education which provide no skill nor sobriety in using it when it is sharpened. This is why the program of Christianity so generally puts goodness first. The initial program of Christ used men who were described as "unlearned and ignorant," by which was meant that they had no ordinary school advantages, which

were not widely available for their class in that day. But under the spell of the new goodness which formed in them and which they had seen at its fullest in Christ himself, they became alert, keen, trained men of insight. Presently there appeared men of the highest culture to take part in the leadership. Testimony was thereby borne to the fact that learning and goodness are not in conflict. No man ever knew too much to help the Christian program, but many a learned man has lacked the essential goodness which would make him most helpful.

4. A fourth item in the Christian program for giving the world a right social order is the spread in the world of a true and health-giving religion. This means that the program must be constantly regarded as the outgrowing of the will of God in the world. Religion is not the mark of a certain stage in human progress but an essential element in human relationships. It is the acceptance by the human spirit of its widest environment and the resolution to bring its lesser environments into accord with it. But it is also the point of coöperation between God and man. Only religious men have any consciousness of fellowship with infinite power and wisdom. The Christian Faith in its belief in the incarnation of God in Christ and in the constant manifestation of God in other moral personalities reminds the world that God is not to be thought of as remote from its life nor indifferent to its needs. He is at work in the history of humanity, and is ready to do larger things when men are ready to accept partnership with him. He does not cut the nerve of the human will by executing his plans without human coöperation. There is a Chinese saying: " 'What will you have?' says God; 'pay for it and take it.' " The same idea appears in an old Greek story in which a slave pleads with his fellows: "Why call ye upon the gods? Ye have hands; wipe your own noses!" But this is not the full Christian idea. One

of the earliest writers reminds Christian believers that they are co-laborers with God, building the new Kingdom under his guidance and support and by his aid, so that their small efforts gain more than their natural results. The same writer said that he could do all things in Christ who strengthened him. If anyone looking out on the world as it is declares that the new world is impossible, let him remember the familiar word of Jesus: "With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible." The Christian Faith presents a perpetual and abiding power which is available for good men everywhere who will accept the program of Jesus Christ for the new day which he seeks to bring. It cannot be done apart from God, and it is as a religion that the Christian Faith offers itself to the world, not as a mere ethic, nor as a body of principles for human conduct, nor as a history. Its hope is in God. It is a religion definitely and unashamedly.

This is why it is offered so earnestly to the nations which have not known it heretofore. It is not Christendom that is offered; it is not a finished faith that is offered; it is not an ideal history that is offered. It is a great, formative Personality out from whom there has come the Christian religion, not as a body of doctrines which can be passed on unchanged from one mind to another, but as a vital reality which will express itself in different ways according to the needs and agencies to be met and used. We who have been Christians for generations do not ask that others copy us. We offer them the Original whom we have poorly copied. We do not want them to drink from our stream. We offer them the Fountain out of which our stream has flowed and which is not responsible for the detritus which we have cast into it. We do not want them to take our teaching. We offer them our Teacher who is also our Savior, and ask them

to sit at his feet, as we have so badly done. Our experience is at their service so far as it may help. A modern statesman has recently said that "history is written that we may go over the road of progress but once and not a hundred times." We know that men are enough alike so that one man may learn from another, from his successes and his failures. Christian believers have had knowledge of Christ and his truth and love for these many years, and they are deeply convinced that he is what the world needs as it needs nothing else. They do not want the world to come to them but to him.

An incident in the Christian Scripture tells the whole story. A father once brought his stricken child to some of the followers of Christ to be cured of his ailment. They found they could not cure him. But presently Christ himself came by and seeing the difficulty said, "Bring him to me," and when that was done his trouble was removed, and the lad was sent out to his glad, free life again. It has proved many times that the followers of Christ have not been so able as they ought to be to help the needy world, but when they fail, there is still a sure victory in bringing the needy world to Christ himself. He does not fail. It is to him that the Christian conviction would carry the world.

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